THERON and ASPASIO:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Moſt *Important* and *Intereſting* Subjects.

By JAMES HERVEY, A. M.
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For Zion's *ſake will I not hold my Peace, and for* Jeruſalem's *ſake I will not reſt, until the* Righteouſneſs *thereof go forth as Brightneſs, and the* Salvation *thereof as a Lamp that burneth.*

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A SERIES OF LETTERS.

LETTER VI.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

THE laſt Evening was one of the fineſt I ever ſaw. According to my Cuſtom, I made an Excurſion into the open Fields; and wanted nothing to complete the Satisfaction, but my Friend's Company *. I could not but obſerve, how much your improving Converſation heightened the Charms of Nature. When Religion applied Philoſophy, every Thing was *Inſtructive*, as well as *pleaſing*. —— Not a Breeze ſwept over the Plains, t clear the Sky, and cool the Air; but it tended alſo to diſperſe our Doubts, and inliven our Faith in the Supreme All-ſufficient GOOD. —— Not a Cloud tinged the Firmament with radiant Colours, or amuſed the Sight with romantic Shapes; but We beheld a Picture of the preſent World, of its *fading* Acquiſitions and fantaſtic Joys, in the mimic Forms and the tranſitory Scene.——Even the weakeſt of the

* *Tu quod abes excepto, cætera lætus.*

Inſect-Tribe, that ſkim the Air in ſportive Silence, addreſſed Us with the ſtrongeſt Incitements, and gave Us the loudeſt Calls, to be *active* in our Day, and *uſeful* in our Generation. They cried, at leaſt when You lent them your Tongue,

Such is vain Life, an idle Flight of Days,
A ſtill deluſive Round of fickly Joys,
A Scene of little Cares, and trifling Paſſions,
If not ennobled by the Deeds of Virtue.

How often, at the Approach of ſober Eve, have We ſtole along the Cloyſters of a ſequeſtered Bower; attentive to the Tale of ſome *querulous* Current, that ſeemed to be ſtruck with Horror at the awful Gloom; and complained with heavier Murmurs, as it paſſed under the blackening Shades, and along the Root-obſtructed Channel.—Or elſe, far from the babbling Brook, and ſoftly treading the graſſy Path, We liſtened to the *Nightingale*'s Song, while every Gale held its Breath, and all the Leaves forbore their Motion, that they might neither drown nor interrupt the melodious Woe.—From both which penſive Strains, You endeavoured to temper and chaſtiſe the exuberant Gaiety of my Spirit. You convinced me, that *true* Joy is a ſerious Thing*: is the Child of ſedate Thought, not the Spawn of intemperate Mirth: nurſed, not by the Sallies of diſſolute Merriment, but by the Exerciſe of ſerene Contemplation.

Sometimes, at the gladſome Return of Morn, we have aſcended an airy Eminence; and hailed the new-born Day; and followed, with our delighted Eye, the Mazes of ſome glittering Stream.—Here *ruſhing*, with impetuous Fury, from the Mountain's Side; foaming over the rifted Rocks, and roaring down the craggy Steep. Impatient, as it were, to get free from ſuch rugged Paths, and mingle with the Beauties of the lower Vale.—There, ſlackening its headlong Career, and ſmoothing its Eddies into an even Flow. While, deep

* *Res ſeveræ eſt verum Gaudium.* SEN.

deep embosomed in the verdant Mead, it *glides* through the cherished and smiling Herbage. Sometimes, lost amidst closing Willows; sometimes, emerging with fresh Beauty from the leafy Covert; always roving with an Air of amorous Complacency, as though it would caress the fringed Banks and flowery Glebe.—Reminded, by this watery Monitor, of that Constancy and Vigour, with which the Affections should move towards the great *Center* of Happiness, *CHRIST JESUS*—of that determined Ardour, with which we should break through the Intanglements of Temptation, and Obstacles of the World, in order to reach our everlasting *Rest*—and of the mighty Difference between the turbulent, the frothy, the precipitate Gratifications of Vice, and the calm, the substantial, the permanent Delights of *Religion*.

Or else, with eager View, we have surveyed the extensive Prospect, and wandered over all the Magnificence of Things——an endless Variety of graceful Objects, and delightful Scenes! Each soliciting our chief Regard; every one worthy of our whole Attention; all conspiring to touch the Heart with a mingled Transport of Wonder, of Gratitude, and of Joy.—So that we have returned from our rural Expedition, not as the *Spendthrift* from the Gaming-table, cursing his Stars, and raving at his ill Luck; gulled of his Money, and the derided Dupe of Sharpers: Not as the *Libertine* from the House of Wantonness*, forfeited,

* *Solomon*, in order to deter unwary Youth from those Sinks of Uncleanness, represents the Harlot under the Character of a pestilent Hag, or baleful Sorceress. *Her Feet go down to Death*; Prov. v. 5. *Her House is* the high Road *to Hell*; Prov. vii. 27. yea, *her Guests are in the Depths of Hell*; Prov. ix. 18.——The second Clause seems to be emphatical. The original Expression is in the plural Number דרכי. I choose therefore to render it, not simply *The Road*, but more largely *The High Road*: from which many other Ways of Guilt branch out, in which many other Paths of Ruin coincide. There, Murder is often known, to drench her Dagger in Blood; and Robbery forms the rash Resolve, which ends in the ignominious Halter. There Intemperance daily brews the Bowl, which enervates the Constitution, and transforms the Man into a Beast. While Disease, pale cadaverous noi-

ſurfeited with the rank Debauch, dogged by Shame, goaded by Remorſe, with a thouſand recent Poiſons tingling in his Veins. But we returned, as Ships of Commerce from the *golden* Continent, or the *ſpicy* Iſlands, with new Acceſſions of ſublime Improvement, and ſolid Pleaſure With a deeper Veneration for the Almighty CREATOR; with a warmer ſenſe of his unſpeakable Favours; and with a more inflamed Deſire, "to know him now by Faith, and after this Life to have the Fruition of his glorious "GODHEAD."

Sometimes, with an agreeable Relaxation, we have transferred our Cares, from the Welfare of the Nation to the Flouriſhing of the Farm; and, inſtead of enacting Regulations for the civil Community, we have planned Schemes for the Cultivation of our Ground, and the Proſperity of our Cattle — Inſtead of attending to the Courſe of Fleets, and the Deſtination of Armies, We have directed the Plough, where to rend the graſſy Turf; or taught the Honey ſuckle to wind round the Arbour, and the Jeſſamine to climb upon the Wall. — Inſtead of interpoſing our friendly Offices, to reconcile contending Kingdoms; We have formed a *Treaty* of *Coalition*, between the ſtranger Cyon, and the adopting Tree; and, by the remarkable Melioration of the enſuing Fruit, demonſtrated (would contending Empires regard the Precedent) what Advantages flow from pacific Meaſures, and an amicable Union.———Inſtead of unravelling the Labyrinths of State, and tracing the Fineſſes of foreign Courts; We have made ourſelves acquainted with the *Politics* of Nature, and obſerved, how wonderfully, how myſteriouſly, that great Projectreſs acts. ——In this Place ſhe rears a vaſt Trunk, and unfolds a Multiplicity of Branches, from one ſmall Berry. She

ſome Diſeaſe, anticipates the Putrefaction of the Grave, and cauſes the wretched *Martyrs* of *Vice* to rot even above Ground. — Well may every one, who loves Life, and would fain ſee good Days, cry out with a Mixture of Deteſtation and Dread; "O my Soul, "Come not thou into their horrid Haunts!"

Dii meliora Piis, Erroremque Hoſtibus illum! VIRG.

She qualifies, by her amazing Operations, a few contemptible Acorns, that were formerly carried in a Child's Lap, to bear the *Britiſh* Thunder round the Globe, and ſecure to our Iſland the Sovereignty of the Ocean. — In another Place, ſhe produces from a dry Grain, *firſt the* green *Blade*; *then the* turgid *Ear*; *afterwards the* full-grown and ripened *Corn in the Ear**. Repaying, with exact Punctuality, and with laviſh Uſury, the Huſbandman's Toil, and the Huſbandman's Loan: cauſing, by a moſt ſurpriſing Reſurrection, the Death of one Seed, to be fruitful in the Birth of Hundreds.

But I forget your Caution, *Aſpaſio*; forget, how kindly you have checked me, when I have been haranguing upon, I know not what, Powers and Works of Nature. Whereas, it is GOD who *worketh hitherto* †: who to this Day exerts, and to the End of Time will exert, that ſecret but unremitted Energy, which is the Life of this majeſtic Syſtem, and the Cauſe of all its ſtupendous Operations.—— Let this ſhew you, how much I want my Guide, my Philoſopher, and Friend. Without his prompting Aid, my Genius is dull; my Reflections are aukward; and my religious Improvements jejune; ſomewhat like the *bungling* Imitations of the Tool, compared with the *maſterly* Effects of Vegetation ——— However, I will proceed. Yet, not from any View of informing my *Aſpaſio*, but only to draw a Bill upon his Pen; and lay him under an Obligation to enrich me with another Letter upon the grand and excellent Subject of his laſt.

Art is dim-ſighted in her Plans, and defective even in her moſt elaborate Eſſays. But *Nature*, or rather Nature's ſublime AUTHOR, is indeed a Deſigner and a *Workman that need not be aſhamed* ‡. His Eye ſtrikes out ten thouſand elegant Models, and his Touch executes all with inimitable Perfection. —— What an admirable Specimen is Here, of the divine Skill, and of the divine Goodneſs! This terraqueous

* Mark iv. 28. † John v. 17. ‡ Tim. 15.

Globe is intended, not only for a Place of Habitation, but for a Storehouſe of Conveniencies. If We examine the ſeveral Apartments of our great Abode; if We take a general *Inventory* of our common Goods; We ſhall find the utmoſt Reaſon to be charmed with the Diſplays, both of nice Oeconomy, and of boundleſs Profuſion.

Obſerve the *Surface* of this univerſal Meſſuage. The Ground, coarſe as it may ſeem, and trodden by every Foot, is nevertheleſs the *Laboratory*, where the moſt exquiſite Operations are performed; the *Shop*, if I may ſo ſpeak, where the fineſt Manufactures are wrought. Though a Multitude of Generations have always been accommodated, and though a Multitude of Nations are daily ſupplied by its Liberalities, it ſtill continues inexhauſted. Is a Reſource, that never fails; a Magazine, never to be drained.

The *Unevenneſs* of the Ground, far from being a Blemiſh or a Defect; heightens its Beauty, and augments its Uſefulneſs. — *Here*, it is ſcooped into deep and ſheltered Vales, almoſt conſtantly covered with a ſpontaneous Growth of Verdure, which, all tender and ſucculent, compoſes an eaſy Couch, and yields the moſt agreeable Fodder, for the various Tribes of Cattle. — — *There*, it is extended into a wide, open, champain Country: which, annually repleniſhed with the Huſbandman's Seed, ſhoots into a copious Harveſt. A Harveſt, not only of that *principal Wheat*, which is the Staff of our Life, and ſtrengthens our Heart; but of the *appointed Barley* *, and various other Sorts of Grain, which yield an excellent Food for our Animals; and either enable them to diſpatch our Drudgery, or elſe fatten their Fleſh for our Tables.

The Furrows, obedient to the Will of Man, vary their Produce †. They bring forth a Crop of tall, flexile, ſlender Plants ‡: whoſe thin filmy Coat, dried, attenu-

* Iſai. xxviii. 25.

† One may venture to ſay of the Earth, with regard to its vegetable Operation;

Omnia transformat ſeſe in Miracula Rerum.

‡ Flax and Hemp.

attenuated, and skilfully manufactured, transforms itself into some of the most necessary *Accommodations* of Life, and genteelest *Embellishments* of Society. — It is wove into ample Volumes of Cloth; which, fixed to the Mast give Wings to our Ships, and waft them to the Extremities of the Ocean. — It is twisted into vast Lengths of Cordage; which add Nerves to the Crane, and lend Sinews to the Pulley; or else, adhering to the Anchor, they fasten the Vessel even on the fluctuating Element, and secure its Station even amidst driving Tempests.—It furnishes the Dutchess with her costly Head-dress, and delicately fine Ruffles. No less strong than neat, it supplies the Plowman with his coarse Frock, and the Sailor with his clumsy Trowsers. Its Fibres, artfully ranged by the Operations of the Loom, cover our Tables with a graceful Elegance, and surround our Bodies with a cherishing Warmth. On this the Painter spreads the Colours, which inchant the Eye; in this the Merchant packs the Wares, which enrich the World.

Yonder, the *Hills*, like a grand Amphitheatre, arise. Amphitheatre! All the pompous Works of *Roman* Magnificence, are less than Mole-banks, are mere Cockle-shells, compared with those majestic Elevations of the Earth. Some clad with mantling Vines; some crowned with towering Cedars; some ragged with mishapen Rocks, or yawning with subterraneous Dens. Whose rough and inaccessible Craggs, whose hideous and gloomy Cavities, are not only a continual Refuge for the wild Goats, but have often proved an Asylum to persecuted Merit*, and a Safeguard to the most valuable Lives.

At a greater Distance, the *Mountains* lift their frozen Brows, or penetrate the Clouds with their aspiring Peaks. Their frozen Brows *arrest* the roving, and *condense* the rarefied Vapours †. Their caverned

* To *David*, from *Saul*'s Malice; to *Elijah*, from *Jezebel*'s Vengeance; to many of the primitive *Christians*, from the Rage of persecuting Emperors: *they wandered in Deserts and in Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the Earth.* Heb. xi. 38.

† Therefore styled—*Nimbosa Cacumina Montis.* VIRG.

Bowels collect the dripping Treasures, and send them abroad, in gradual Communications, by trickling Springs. While their steep Sides *precipitate* the watery Stores; rolling them on with such a forcible Impulse *, that they never intermit their unwearied Course, till they have swept through the most extensive Climes, and regained their native Seas.

The *Vineyard* swells into a profusion of Clusters: some tinged with the deepest Purple, and delicately clouded with azure: some, clad with a whitish transparent Skin, which shews the tempting Kernels, lodged in luscious Nectar.—The Vine requires a strong Reflection of the Sun-beams, and a very large Proportion of Warmth. How commodiously do the Hills and Mountains minister to this purpose! May We not call those vast Declivities, the *Garden-walls* of Nature? Which far more effectually than the most costly Glasses, or most artful Green-houses, concenter the solar Heat, and complete the Maturity of the Grape. Distending it with a Liquor of the finest Scent, the most agreeable Relish, and the most exalted Qualities: such as dissipate Sadness, and inspire Vivacity: such as make glad the Heart of Man, and most sweetly prompt both his Gratitude and his Duty, to the Munifi-

* It is observed, that the largest Rivers in the World, those which roll the heaviest Burden of Waters, and perform the most extensive Circuit through the Nations, generally take their Rise from Mountains. The *Rhine*, the *Rhone*, and the *Po*, all descend from the *Alps*. The *Tygris* derives its rapid Flood, from the everlasting Snows, and steep Ridges of *Niphates*. And to mention no more Instances, the River of the *Amazons*, which pours itself through a Multitude of Provinces and waters near eighteen hundred Leagues of Land, has its Urn in the Caverns, and its Impetus from the Precipices, of that immense Range of Hills, the *Andes*.

If the reader is inclined to see the Origin and Formation of Rivers described, in all the Sublimity of Diction, and with all the Graces of Poetry, He may find this Entertainment in Mr. *Thomson's* Autumn, *Lin.* 781. Last Edit.

Amazing Scene! behold the Glooms disclose.
I see the Rivers in their infant Beds!
Deep, deep, I hear them, labring to get free, &c.

Munificent GIVER.—I grieve, and I bluſh for my Fellow-creatures, That any ſhould *abuſe* this Indulgence of Heaven. That Any ſhould turn ſo valuable a Gift of GOD into an Inſtrument of Sin. Turn the moſt exhilarating of Cordials into Poiſon, Madneſs, and Death.

The *Kitchen-garden* preſents us with a new Train of Benefits. In its blooming Ornaments, what unaffected Beauty! In its culinary Productions, what diverſified Riches! It ripens a Multitude of nutrimental Eſculents, and almoſt an equal Abundance of medicinal Herbs; diſtributing Refreſhments to the Healthy, and adminiſtering Remedies to the Sick.—The *Orchard*, all fair, and ruddy, and bowing down beneath its own delicious Burden, gives Us a freſh Demonſtration of our CREATOR's Kindneſs. Regales Us, firſt, with all the Delicacies of Summer-Fruits; next, with the more laſting Succeſſion of Autumnal Dainties.

What is Nature, but a Series of Wonders, and a Fund of Delights! That ſuch a Variety of Fruits, ſo beautifully coloured, ſo elegantly ſhaped, and ſo charmingly flavoured, ſhould ariſe from the Earth! Than which nothing is more inſipid, ſordid, and deſpicable.—I am ſtruck with pleaſing Aſtoniſhment at the *Cauſe* of theſe fine Effects, and no leſs ſurprized at the *Manner* of bringing them into Exiſtence. I take a Walk in my Garden, or a Turn through my Orchard, in the Month of *December*. There ſtand ſeveral Logs of Wood, faſtened to the Ground. They are erect indeed and ſhapely, but without either Senſe or Motion. No human Hand will touch them; no human Aid will ſuccour them; yet, in a little Time they are beautified with Bloſſoms, they are covered with Leaves, and at laſt are loaded with Mellow Treaſures; with the downy Peach and the poliſhed Plum; with the muſky Apricot and the juicy Pear; with the Cherry, and its coral Pendants, glowing through Lattices of Green,

———————*and dark*
Beneath her ample Leaf, the luſcious Fig.

I have

I have wondered at the Structure of my Watch; wondered more at the Description of the Silk-mills; most of all, at the Account of those prodigious Engines, invented by *Archimedes*. But what are all the Inventions of all the Geometricians and Mechanics in the World, compared with these inconceivably nice *Automata* * of Nature! These *self-operating Machines* dispatch their Business with a Punctuality that never mistakes, with a Dexterity that cannot be equalled. In Spring, they clothe themselves with such unstudied but exquisite Finery, as far exceeds the Embroidery of the Needle, or the Labours of the Loom. In Autumn, they present Us with such a Collation of Sweetmeats, and such Blandishments of Taste, as surpass all that the most critical Luxury could prepare, or the most lavish Fancy imagine.—So that those *coarse* and *senseless* Logs, first decorate the divine Creation, then perform the Honours of the Table.

If, amidst these ordinary Productions of the Earth, GOD appears so *great in counsel and mighty in work* †: what may We expect to see in the Palaces of Heaven; in the Hierarhies of Angels; and in that wonderful REDEEMER, who is, beyond all other Objects, beyond all other Manifestations, *the Wisdom of GOD and the Power of GOD* ‡.

The *Forest rears* Myriads of massy Bodies, which, though

* *Automata*, or *self-operating* Machines; not meant to set aside the Superintendency of Providence, but only to exclude the Co-operation of Man.

The Word αὐτομάτη is used by our MASTER; is a very fine, and most expressive Word; for which Reasons, I have ventured to give it a Kind of *English* Naturalization. It signifies, says a *Greek* Scholiast, τας μηχανας, αι, κατ' αὐτας ἐνεργουσαι. See *Mark* iv. 28.—It is an Explication and an Abridgment of that remarkable Phrase, which occurs in the *Mosaic* History of the Creation, ברא אלהים לעשות אשר Gen. ii. 3. *Which GOD created and made*, appears tautological, and is by no means an exact Translation. It should rather be interpreted. *Which GOD created in order to make*; to make, by these prolific Instruments and re-producing Principles, a continual Succession of Animals, Vegetables, and Creatures.

† Jer. xxxii. 19. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 24.

though neither gay with Bloſſoms, nor rich with Fruit, ſupply Us with Timber of various Kinds, and of every deſirable Quality *. But who ſhall cultivate ſuch huge Trees, diffuſed over ſo vaſt a Space? The Toil were endleſs. See therefore the all-wiſe and ever-gracious Ordination of Providence! They are ſo conſtituted, that they have no need of the Spade and the Pruning-knife. Nay, the little Cares of Man would diminiſh, rather than augment their Dignity and their Uſefulneſs. The more they are neglected, the better they thrive; the more wildly grand and magnificent they grow.

When felled by the Axe, they are ſawed into Beams, and ſuſtain the Roofs of our Houſes: they are faſhioned into Carriages, and ſerve for the Conveyance of the heavieſt Loads. Their Subſtance ſo *pliant*, that they yield to the Chizzel of the Turner, and are ſmoothed by the Plane of the Joiner; are wrought into the niceſt Diminutions of Shape, and compoſe ſome of the fineſt Branches of houſhold Furniture.—Their Texture ſo *ſolid* that they form the moſt important Parts of thoſe mighty Engines; which adapting themſelves to the Play of mechanic Powers, diſpatch more Work in a ſingle Hour, than could otherwiſe be accompliſhed in many days.—At the ſame Time, their Preſſure is ſo *light*, that they float upon the Waters; and glide along the Surface, almoſt with as much Agility, as the finny Fry glance through the Deeps:—Thus, while they impart Magnificence to Architecture, and beſtow numberleſs Conveniencies on the Family; they conſtitute the very Baſis of Navigation, and give Expedition, give Being to Commerce.

Amidſt the inacceſſible Depths of the Foreſt, an Habi-

* *Tully* has given Us an Abridgment of all the preceding Particulars. Which, I think, is one of the fineſt Landſcapes in Miniature, that the deſcriptive Pen ever drew.—*Terra univerſa cernatur, veſtita Floribus, Herbis, Arboribus, Frugibus; quorum omnium incredibilis Multitudo inſatiabili Varietate diſtinguitur. Adde huc Fontium gelidas Perennitates, Liquores perlucidos Amnium, Riparum Veſtitus viridiſſimos, Speluncarum concavas Altitudines, Saxorum Aſperitates, impendentium Montium, Altitudines Immenſitateſque Camporum.* De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.

Habitation is assigned for those *ravenous* Beasts, whose Appearance would be frightful, and their Neighbourhood dangerous to Mankind. Here, the sternly majestic Lion rouses Himself from his Den; stalks through the midnight Shades; and awes the savage Herds with his Roar. Here, the fiery Tyger springs upon his Prey, and the gloomy Bear trains up her Whelps. Here, the swift Leopard ranges, and the grim Wolf prowls, and both in quest of Murder and Blood.—Were these horrid Animals to dwell in our Fields, what *Havoc* would they make? What *Consternation* would they spread? But they voluntarily bury themselves, in the deepest Recesses of the Desart: while the Ox, the Horse, and the serviceable Quadrupeds, live under our Inspection, and keep within our Call: profiting Us as much by their Presence, as the others oblige Us by their Absence.

If, at any Time, those shaggy Monsters make an Excursion into the habitable World, it is when Man retires to his Chamber, and sleeps in Security. The Sun, which invites other Creatures abroad, gives them the Signal to retreat. *The Sun ariseth, and they get them away, and lay them down in their Dens.** Strange! That the orient Light, which is so pleasing to Us, should strike such Terror on them! Should, more effectually than a Legion of Guards, put them all to flight, and clear the Country of those formidable Enemies!

If we turn our Thoughts to the *Atmosphere*, We find a most curious and exquisite Apparatus of Air. Which, because no Object of our Sight, is seldom observed, and little regarded; yet is a Source of innumerable Advantages. And all these Advantages (which is almost incredible) are fetched from the very Jaws of Ruin. My Meaning may be obscure, therefore I explain myself.

We live plunged, if I may so speak, in an Ocean of Air. Whose *Pressure*, upon a Person of moderate Size, is equal to the Weight of *twenty thousand* Pounds. Tremen-

* Psal. civ. 22.

Tremendous Conſideration! Should the Cieling of a Room, or the Roof of a Houſe, fall upon Us with half that force, what deſtructive Effects muſt enſue? Such a Force would infallibly drive the Breath from our Lungs, or break every Bone in our Bodies. Yet, ſo admirably has the Divine Wiſdom contrived this aerial Fluid, and ſo nicely counterpoiſed its dreadful Power, that We receive not the ſlighteſt Hurt; We ſuffer no manner of Inconvenience; We even *enjoy* the Load. Inſtead of being as a Mountain on our Loins, it is like Wings to our Feet, or like Sinews to our Limbs —Is not this *common* Ordination of Providence, thus conſidered, ſomewhat like the Miracle of the burning Buſh; whoſe tender and combuſtible Subſtance, though in the midſt of Flames, was neither conſumed nor injured*? Is it not almoſt as marvelous, as the Prodigy of the three *Hebrew* Youths? Who walked in the fiery Furnace, without having a Hair of their Head ſinged, or ſo much as the Smell of Fire paſſing on their Garments†? —Surely, We have Reaſon to ſay unto GOD; *Oh! how terrible*, yet how beneficent, *art Thou in thy Works!*

The Air, though too weak to ſupport our Flight, is a Thoroughfare for innumerable Wings. Here the whole Commonwealth of *Birds* take up their Abode. Here they lodge and expatiate, beyond the Reach of their Adverſaries. Were they to run upon the Earth, they would be expoſed to ten thouſand Dangers, without proper Strength to reſiſt them, or ſufficient Speed to eſcape them. Whereas, by mounting the Skies, and *lifting themſelves up on high*, they are ſecure from Peril, *they ſcorn the Horſe and his Rider* ‡.—Some of them perching upon the Boughs, others ſoaring amidſt the Firmament, entertain Us with their *Notes*. Which are muſical and agreeable, when heard at this convenient Diſtance; but would be noiſy and importunate, if brought nearer to our Ears.—Here, many of thoſe feathered Families reſide, which yield Us a delicious *Treat*; yet give Us no Trouble, put Us to no Expence,

* Exod. iii. 2. † Dan. iii. 27. ‡ Job xxxix. 18.

pence, and, till the Moment We want them, are wholly out of our Way.

The Air, commiſſioned by its All bountiful AUTHOR, charges itſelf with the Adminiſtration of ſeveral Offices, which are perfectly obliging, and no leſs ſerviceable to Mankind.—Co-operating with our Lungs, it *ventilates* the Blood, and refines our Fluids. It qualifies and attempers the vital Warmth; promotes and exalts the animal Secretions. Many Days We might live, or even whole Months, without the Light of the Sun or the Glimmering of a Star. Whereas, if We are deprived, only for a few Minutes, of this aerial Support, We ſicken, We faint, We die.—The ſame *univerſal Nurſe* has a conſiderable Share, in cheriſhing the ſeveral Tribes of Plants. It helps to transfuſe vegetable Vigour into the Trunk of the Oak, and a blooming Gaiety into the Spread of the Roſe.

The Air undertakes to convey to our Noſtrils the extremely ſubtil *Effluvia*, which tranſpire from odoriferous Bodies. Thoſe detached Particles are ſo imperceptibly ſmall, that they would elude the moſt careful Hand, or eſcape the niceſt Eye. But this truſty Depoſitary *receives* and *eſcorts* the inviſible Vagrants, without loſing ſo much as a ſingle Atom. Entertaining Us, by this means, with the delightful Senſations, which ariſe from the Fragrance of Flowers; and admoniſhing Us, by the Tranſmiſſion of offenſive Smells, to withdraw from an unwholeſome Situation, or beware of any pernicious Food.

The Air, by its undulating Motion, conducts to our Ear all the Diverſities of *Sound*; and, thereby diſcharges the Duty of a moſt ſeaſonable and faithful Monitor. As I walk acroſs the Streets of *London*, with my Eye engaged on other Objects; a Dray, perhaps, with all its Load, is driving down directly upon me. Or, as I ride along the Road, muſing and unapprehenſive, a Chariot and ſix is whirling on, with a rapid Career, at the Heels of my Horſe. The Air, like a *vigilant* Friend, in pain for my Welfare, immediately takes the Alarm; and, while the Danger is at a conſiderable

ſiderable Diſtance, diſpatches a Courier to advertiſe me of the approaching Miſchief. It even thunders in my Ear; and, with a *clamorous* but *kind* Importunity, urges me to be upon my Guard, and provide for my Safety.

The Air wafts to our Senſe all the Modulations of *Muſic*, and the more agreeable Entertainments of refined Converſation. When *Myrtilla* ſtrikes the ſilver Strings, and teaches the willing Harpſicord to warble with her CREATOR's Praiſe: When her ſacred Sonata warms the Heart with Devotion, and wings our Deſires to Heaven.—When *Cleora* tunes her Song, or the Nightingale imitates her inchanting Voice: when She heightens every melodious Note, with her adored REDEEMER's Name; and ſo ſmooths her charming Tones, ſo breathes her rapturous Soul, "that GOD's own Ear liſtens delighted."—When Wiſdom takes it Seat on *Mitio's* Tongue; and flows, in perſpicuous Periods, and inſtructive Truths, amidſt the choſen Circle of his acquaintance.—When Benevolence, aſſociated with Perſuaſion, dwell on *Nicander*'s Lips; and plead the Cauſe of injured Innocence, or oppreſſed Virtue.— When Goodneſs, leagued with Happineſs, accompany *Euſebius* into the Pulpit, and reclaim the Libertine from the Slavery of his Vices; diſengage the Infidel from the Faſcination of his Prejudices; and ſo affectionately, ſo pathetically invite the whole Audience, to partake the unequalled Joys of pure Religion.—In all theſe Caſes, the Air diſtributes every muſical Variation with the utmoſt *Exactneſs*; and delivers the Speaker's Meſſage, with the moſt punctual *Fidelity*. Whereas, without this Internuntio, all would be ſullen and unmeaning Silence. We ſhould loſe both the Pleaſure and the Profit; neither be charmed with the harmonious, nor improved by the articulate Accents.

The Breezes of the Air when vague and unconfined, are ſo very gentle; that they ſport with the moſt inoffenſive Wantonneſs, amidſt *Ophelia*'s Locks, and ſcarce diſadjuſt a ſingle Curl. but, when collected and applied by the Contrivance of Man, they

act

act with such *prodigious Force*; as is sufficient to whirl round the hugest Wheels, though clogged with the most incumbering Loads. They make the ponderous Millstones move as swiftly, as the Dancer's Heel: and the massy Beams play as nimbly, as the Musician's Finger.

If we climb, in Speculation, the higher Regions, We find an endless Succession of *Clouds*, fed by Evaporations from the Ocean. The Clouds are themselves a Kind of Ocean, suspended in the Air with amazing Skill. They travel, in detached Parties, and in the Quality of *itinerant Cisterns*, round all the terrestrial Globe. They fructify, by proper Communications of Moisture, the spacious Pastures of the Wealthy; and gladden, with no less liberal Showers, the Cottager's little Spot. Nay, so condescending is the Benignity of their great Proprietor, that they *satisfy the desolate and waste Ground*; *and cause*, even in the most uncultivated Wilds, *the Bud of the tender Herb to spring forth**. That the Natives of the lonely Desart, those savage Herds which know no Master's Stall, may nevertheless experience the Care, and rejoice in the Bounty, of an All supporting PARENT.

How wonderful! That the Water, which is much *denser* and far *heavier* than the Air, should rise into it; make its way through it; and take a Station in the very uppermost Regions of it! This, one would imagine, were almost as impossible, as for the Rivers to run back to their Source. Yet Providence has contrived a Way, to render it not only practicable, but Matter of continual Occurrence.

How wonderful! That *pendent Lakes* should be diffused, or *fluid Mountains* heaped over our Heads; and both sustained in the thinnest Parts of the Atmosphere! We little think of that surprising Expedient, which, without Conduits of Stone, or Vessels of Brass, keeps such Loads of Water in a buoyant State. *Job* and *Elihu* considered this, and were struck with holy Admiration. *Dost thou know the Ballancings of the Clouds?* How

* Job xxxviii. 27.

How ſuch ponderous Bodies are made to hang with an even Poiſe, and hover like the lighteſt Down? Theſe are *the wondrous Works of HIM, who is perfect in Knowledge**. *He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds; and the Cloud*, though nothing is more looſe and fluid, becomes, by his Almighty Order, ſtrong and tenacious as Caſks of Iron; it *is not rent* † under all the Weight.

When the Sluices are opened, and the Waters deſcend, We might reaſonably ſuſpect, that they ſhould burſt forth in Cataracts, or pour themſelves out in Torrents. Whereas, inſtead of ſuch a diſorderly and precipitate Effuſion, which would be infinitely pernicious, they coaleſce into *Globules*, and are diſpenſed in gentle *Showers*. They are often attenuated into the ſmallneſs of a Hair ‡; they ſpread themſelves, as if they were ſtrained through the Orifices of the fineſt Watering-pot; and form thoſe *ſmall Drops of Rain, which the Clouds diſtil upon Man abundantly* ‖. Thus, inſtead of drowning the Earth, and ſweeping away its Fruits, they cheriſh univerſal Nature; and, in Conformity to the Practice of their great MASTER, diſtribute their humid Stores to Men, to Animals, and Vegetables, *as they are able to bear them* §.

Beſides the Reſervoirs of Water, here are cantoned various Parties of *Winds*, mild or fierce, gentle or boiſterous; furniſhed with breezy Wings, to fan the glowing Firmament, and diffuſe Refreſhment on a fainting World; or elſe, fitted to act as an univerſal *Beſom*; and, by ſweeping the Chambers of the Atmoſphere, to preſerve the fine aerial Fluid free from Feculencies. Without this wholeſome Agency of the Winds, the Air would ſtagnate; become putrid; and ſurround Us, in the literal Senſe of the Words, with *Darkneſs that might be felt* **. *London*, *Paris*, and all the great Cities in the World, inſtead of being the Seats

* Job xxxvii. 16. † Job xxvi. 8.

‡ The *Hebrew* Words, which convey the Idea of gentle *Rain*, ſignify a Portion of Water, made ſmall as a *Hair*, or divided into *Millions* of Parts, שערים ורביבים Deut. xxxii. 2.

‖ Job xxxvi. 28. § Mark iv. 33. ** Exod. x. 21.

Seats of Elegance, would degenerate into Sinks of Corruption.

At *Sea*, the Winds ſwell the Mariner's Sails, and ſpeed his Courſe along the watery Way: ſpeed it far more effectually, than a thouſand Rowers, bending to their Strokes, and tugging at the Oar,—— By *Land*, they perform the Office of an immenſe Seed-man, and ſcatter abroad the reproductive Principles of a Multitude of Plants; which, though the Staff of Life to many Animals, are too ſmall for the Management, or too mean for the Attention of Man.—*HE bringeth the Winds out of his Treaſuries* †, is a very juſt Obſervation; whether it relate to GOD's abſolute and uncontroulable Dominion over this moſt potent Meteor, or to its welcome and ſalutary Influence † on all the Face of Nature.

Here are *Lightnings* ſtationed. Though dormant at preſent, they are in act to ſpring, and launch the livid Flame: whenever their piercing Flaſh is neceſſary to deſtroy the *ſulphureous* Vapours; or diſlodge any other *noxious* Matter, which might be prejudicial to the delicate Temperature of the Æther, and obſcure its more than cryſtalline Tranſparency.

Above all is ſituate a *radiant* and *majeſtic* Orb, which inlightens the Tracts, chears the Inhabitants, and colours all the Productions of this habitable Globe. While the Air, by a ſingular Addreſs in managing the Rays, amplifies their Uſefulneſs: its *reflecting* Power * augments that Heat, which is the Life

†† Pſal. cxxxv. 7. *Quam ſalutares autem dedit, quam tempeſtivos non modo Hominum, ſed etiam Pecudum Generi, iis denique omnibus quæ oriuntur à Terra, Ventos? Quorum Flatu nimii temperantur Calores, ab iiſdem etiam maritimi Curſus celeres & certi diriguntur.* De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.

* The Air is a curious *Cover*, which, without oppreſſing the Inhabitants of the Earth with any perceivable Weight, confines, reflects, and thereby *increaſes* the vivifying Heat of the Sun. The Air increaſes this kindly Heat, much in the ſame manner as our Garments by Day, our Bed-cloathes by Night, give additional Warmth to our Bodies —— Whereas, when the aerial Veſtment grows thin, or, to ſpeak more philoſophically, when the Air becomes leſs in Quantity, and more *attenuated* in Quality, the ſolar Warmth

Life of Nature; its *refracting* Power prolongs that Splendor, which is the Beauty of the Creation. —— These Emanations of Light, though formed of inactive Matter, yet (aſtoniſhing Apparatus of Almighty Wiſdom!) are refined almoſt to the *Subtilty* of Spirit, and are ſcarce inferior even to Thought in *Speed*. By which means, they ſpread themſelves, with a Kind of inſtantaneous Swiftneſs, through the Circumference of a whole Hemiſphere; and though they fill, whereever they pervade, yet they ſtraiten no Place, embarraſs no One, incumber Nothing.

These give the Diamond its Brilliancy, and the Velvet its Gloſs: to theſe the chearful Eye is obliged for its lively Sparkle, and the modeſt Cheek for its roſy Bluſh. Theſe, attending the judicious Touches of the Pencil, bid the Drapery flow, and the embodied Figure ariſe; bid the Countenance wear the calm Serenity of Thought, or be agitated with the wild Tranſports of Paſſion. —— Without this Circumſtance of *Colour*, we ſhould want all the Entertainments of Viſion, and be at a Loſs to diſtinguiſh one Thing from another. We ſhould heſitate to pronounce, and muſt take a little Journey to determine, whether yonder Incloſure contains a Piece of Paſturage, or a plot of arable Land. We ſhould queſtion, and could not very expeditiouſly reſolve, whether the next Perſon We meet, be a Soldier in his Regimentals or a Swain in his Holiday Suit? A Bride in her Ornaments, or a Widow in her Weeds. But Colour, like a particular Livery, characterizes the Claſs, to which every Individual belongs. It is the *Label*, which indicates, upon the firſt inſpection, its reſpective Quality. It is the

Warmth is very ſenſibly diminiſhed. Travellers on the lofty Mountains of *America*, ſometimes experience, to their terrible Coſt, the Truth of this Obſervation. Though the Clime, at the Foot of thoſe prodigious Hills, is even hot and ſultry; yet on their Summits, the Cold rages with ſuch exceſſive Severity, that it is no unuſual Calamity, for the Horſe and his Rider to be frozen to death. — We have therefore great Reaſon to bleſs the Supreme DISPOSER of Things, for placing Us in the *commodious* Concavity, or rather under the *cheriſhing* Wings of an Atmoſphere.

the *Ticket*, which guides our Choice, and directs our Hand *.

We have curſorily ſurveyed the *upper Rooms* of our great Habitation, and taken a Turn along the *Ground-floor*; if We deſcend into the ſubterraneous Lodgments, the *Cellars* of the ſtately ſtructure, We ſhall there alſo find the moſt exquiſite Contrivance, acting in Concert with the moſt profuſe Goodneſs.——Here are various *Minerals*, of ſovereign Efficacy in Medicine: which rectify the vitiated Blood, and quicken the languid Spirits; which often rekindle the fading Bloom in the Virgin's Complexion, and reinvigorate the infeebled Arm of Manhood.——Here are Beds fraught with *Metals* of the richeſt Value. From hence come the golden Treaſures, from hence the ſilver Stores, which are the very Life of Traffic; and circulate through the Body politic, as the vital Fluid through the animal Frame. Which, in the refining Hand of Charity, are Feet to the Lame, and Eyes to the Blind, and make the Widow's Heart ſing for Joy. Here are Mines, which yield a Metal of meaner Aſpect, but of a firmer Coheſion, and of ſuperior Uſefulneſs. A Metal, that conſtitutes almoſt all the Implements with which Art executes her various Deſigns. Without the Aſſiſtance of *Iron*, Trade would be reduced to the loweſt Ebb; Commerce would feel her Wings clipped; and every Species of mechanic Skill, either

* This I believe ſuggeſts the true Senſe of thoſe noble Metaphors, uſed by the divine Speaker. *It is turned as Clay to the Seal, and they ſtand as a Garment*: *It*, the Earth and all its Productions receive, from the riſing Sun, both Colour and Beauty. Juſt as the ſoft Clay, and the melting Wax, receive an elegant Impreſſion from the Seal.——*They* (the Morning and the Day-ſpring, mentioned in a preceding Verſe) *ſtand as a Garment*; they act the Part of a magnificent and univerſal Clothing; give all viſible Objects, their comely Aſpect, and graceful Diſtinctions. *Job* xxxviii. 14.

What bold and fine Images are here!—The *Sea* had been deſcribed as an *Infant*, changeable, froward, and impetuous, with thick Darkneſs for its Swadling-band. The *Light* is repreſented as an *Handmaid*, attending to *dreſs* the Creation; and executing the CREATOR's Orders, with a *Punctuality* that never fails, with a *Speed* that cannot be equalled.

either utterly fail, or be miſerably baffled. Without the Aſſiſtance of Iron, it would be almoſt impoſſible to rear the ſteady Maſt, to diſplay the daring Canvas or drop the faithful Anchor. Deſtitute of this ever-needful Commodity, we ſhould have no Plow to furrow the Soil, no Shuttle to traverſe the Loom, ſcarce any Ornament for polite, or any Utenſil for ordinary Life.

Here is an inexhauſted Fund of *combuſtible* Materials †, which ſupply the whole Nation with Fewel. Theſe preſent their Miniſtrations in the Kitchen; and yielding themſelves as Aliment to the Flame, render our Food both palatable and healthy.——Theſe offer their Service at the Forge; and with their piercing Heat, mollify the moſt ſtubborn Bars, till they become pliant to the Stroke of the Hammer.——The *Coals* pour themſelves likewiſe into the Glaſs-houſes. They rage amidſt thoſe aſtoniſhing Furnaces, with irreſiſtible but uſeful Fierceneſs. They liquify even the obdurate Flint, and make the moſt rigid Subſtances far more ductile, than the ſofteſt Clay, or the melting Wax: make them obſequious, not only to the lighteſt Touch, but to the Impreſſions of our very Breath.

By this means, we are furniſhed, and from the coarſeſt Ingredients, with the moſt curious, beautiful, and ſerviceable Manufacture in the World. A Manufacture, which tranſmits the Light and Warmth of the Sun into our Houſes; yet excludes the Annoyance of the Rains, and the Violence of the Winds. Which gives *new Eyes* to decrepit Age, and vaſtly *more inlarged* Views to Philoſophy and Science: which leads up the Aſtronomer's Diſcernment, even to the *Satellites* of *Saturn*; and carries down the Naturaliſt's Obſervation, as far as the Animalcule Race: bringing near

† *As for the Earth*, ſays *Job*, *out of it cometh Bread*: Corn, Vegetables, and whatever is good for Food, ſpring from its Surface. While *under it*, *is turned up as it were Fire*: its lower Parts תחתיה its deeper Strata, yield combuſtible Materials; which are eaſily inkindled into Fire, and adminiſter the moſt ſubſtantial Fewel for the Flame. *Job.* xxviii. 5.

near what is immenſely remote, and making viſible what, to our unaſſiſted Sight, would be abſolutely imperceptible.

We have alſo, when the Sun withdraws his Shining, an Expedient to ſupply his Place. We can create an *artificial* Day in our Rooms, and prolong our Studies, or purſue our Buſineſs, under its chearing Influence. With beaming Tapers and ruddy Fires, We *chaſe* the Darkneſs, and *mitigate* † the Cold; We cheriſh Converſation, and cultivate the ſocial Spirit. We render thoſe very Intervals of Time, ſome of the moſt delightful Portions of our Life, which otherwiſe would be a joyleſs and unimproving Void.

Theſe obſcure Caverns are the Birth-place of the moſt ſparkling *Gems*. Which, when nicely poliſhed, and prodigal of their Luſtre, ſtand Candidates for a place on

† I can hardly forbear tranſcribing the grateful and pious Remark, which *Socrates* makes on this Occaſion, Demonſtrating, from the advantageous and benign Conſtitution of Things, GOD's indulgent Care for Mankind, He aſks; Το δε κ) το πυρ πορισαι ημιν, επικερον μεν ψυχρς, επικερον δε σκοτος, συνεργον δε προ πασαν τεχνην, κ) παντα οσα ωφελειας ενεκα ανθρωποι καλασκευαζονται; Ως γαρ συνελονλι ειπειν, ουδεν αξιολογον ανευ πυρ ανθρωποι των προ βιον χρησιμων καλασκευαζονται.——To which his Pupil very intelligently replies, Υπερβαλλει κ) τουτο φιλανθρωπια. *Vid.* Socrat. *Memor.* Lib. IV. A Work, which may be ranked among the *fineſt* Remains of Antiquity. *Equal*, 'tis acknowledged, to any of the antient Compoſitions in Purity of Style, and Dignity of Sentiment. *Superior*, I think, to them all, for the artful, delicate, and happy Manner of conveying Inſtruction.

I wiſh, the Author of the preceding Dialogues had been better acquainted with the *Socratic* Method; and I could wiſh, that young Students for the Miniſtry would adopt the Skill of this *heathen* Philoſopher. Perhaps, no Qualification of human Growth, would more effectually contribute to render them, what St. *Paul* ſtyles διδακλικος.——It ſeems to be the moſt *inſinuating* and *ſucceſsful* Way both to convince and inſtruct. Nay, it convinces the Opponent out of his own Mouth, and makes the Pupil inſtruct himſelf. It is what the TEACHER ſent from GOD practiſed, in thoſe incomparable Sketches of obliging and maſterly Addreſs, The Parable of the *two Debtors*, and of the *good Samaritan*, Luke vii. 41. Luke x. 30.

on the royal Crown, or a Seat on the *virtuous* Fair One's Breaſt. And, I will not with our Men of Gallantry ſay emulate the living Brilliancy of her Eyes; but ſerve as a Foil, to ſet off the Lovelineſs and Excellency of her accompliſhed Mind, and amiable Converſation: *whoſe Price*, according to the unerring Eſtimate of Inſpiration, is ſuperior to Sapphires, *is far above Rubies.**

Here are *Quarries*, ſtocked with Stones, inferior in Beauty to the Jeweler's Ware, but much more eminently beneficial. Which, when properly ranged, and cemented with a tenacious Mortar, form the convenient Abodes of Peace, and build the ſtrongeſt Fortifications of War: defending Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather, and the more formidable Aſſaults of our Enemies. Theſe conſtitute the Arches of the Bridge, which convey the Traveler, with perfect Security, over the deep and rapid Stream. Theſe ſtrengthen the Arms, the ſtupendous Arms, of the Mole; which ſtretch themſelves far into the Ocean, break the Impetuoſity of the Surge, and ſcreen the Bark from tempeſtuous Seas——Theſe ſtony Treaſures are comparatively *ſoft*, while they continue in the Bowels of the Earth; but acquire an increaſing *Hardneſs*, when expoſed to the open Air. Was this remarkable Peculiarity reverſed, what Difficulties would attend the Labours of the Maſon? His Materials could not be extracted from their Bed, nor faſhioned for his Purpoſe, without infinite Toil. Were his Work compleated, it could not long withſtand the Fury of the Elements; but inſenſibly mouldering, or inceſſantly decaying, would elude the Expectations of the Owner; perhaps, might prove an immature Grave, inſtead of a durable Dwelling.

Here are various Aſſortments or vaſt *Layers* of *Clay*. Which however contemptible in its Appearance, is abundantly more advantageous, than the Rocks of Diamond, or the Veins of Gold. This is moulded, with great Expedition and Eaſe, into Veſſels of any

* Prov. xxxi. 10.

Shape, and of almoſt every Size. Some, ſo delicately *fine*, that they compoſe the moſt elegant and ornamental Furniture, for the Tea-table of a Princeſs. Others, ſo remarkably *cheap*, that they are ranged on the Shelves, and miniſter at the Meals, of the pooreſts Peaſant. All ſo perfectly *neat*, that no Liquid takes the leaſt Taint, nor the niceſt Palate any Diſguſt, from their cleanly Services.

A Multiplicity of other valuable Stores, are locked up by Providence, in thoſe ample Vaults. The *Key* of all is committed to the Management of *Induſtry*; with free Permiſſion to produce each particular Species, as Neceſſity ſhall demand, or Prudence direct.

Which ſhall we moſt admire, the bountiful Heart, the liberal Hand, or the All-diſcerning Eye of our Great CREATOR? How obſervable and admirable is his *Precaution*, in removing theſe uſeful but cumbrous Wares, from the Superficies; and ſtowing them in proper Repoſitories, beneath the Ground!—Were they ſcattered over the Surface of the Soil, the Earth would be *embaraſſed* with the enormous Load. Our Roads would be blocked up, and ſcarce any Portion left free for the Operations of Huſbandry——— Were they buried extremely deep, or ſunk to the Center of the Globe, it would coſt Us immenſe Pains to procure them; or rather, they would be quite *inacceſſible*. ——— Were they uniformly ſpread into a Pavement for Nature; the Trees could not ſtrike their Roots, nor the Herbs ſhoot their Blades, but univerſal *Sterility* muſt enſue.—— Whereas, by their preſent Diſpoſition, they furniſh us with a Magazine of metallic, without cauſing any Diminution of our vegetable Treaſures. Foſſils of every ſplendid and ſerviceable Kind enrich the *Bowels*, while Bloom and Verdure embelliſh the *Face* of the Earth.

So judicious is the Arrangement of this grand Edifice! So beneficent the Deſtination of its whole * Furniture! In which, all is regulated with conſummate

* No Notice is taken of the *Ocean*, in this little *Rent-roll* of Nature's Wealth; becauſe, a diſtinct Sketch is given of that grand Receptacle and its principal Services, in *Letter* IX.

mate Skill, and touched into the higheſt Perfection. All moſt exactly adapted to the various Intentions of Providence, and the manifold Exigencies of Mankind; to ſupply *every Want*, We can feel; and gratify *every Wiſh*, We can form.

Inſomuch that the whole Syſtem affords a favourite and exalted Topic of Praiſe, even to thoſe diſtinguiſhed Beings, who *ſtand on the Sea of Glaſs, and have the Harps of God in their Hands.* They lift their Voice and ſing, *Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty* *!——— And is there not Reaſon, my *Aſpaſio* would ſay, infinite Reaſon, for *Us* to join this triumphant Choir; and add Gratitude to our Wonder, Love to our Hallelujahs? Since all theſe Things are to Us, not merely Objects of Contemplation, but Sources of Accommodation: not only a majeſtic Spectacle, bright with the Diſplay of our CREATOR's Wiſdom, but an ineſtimable Gift, rich with the Emanations of his Goodneſs. The Earth hath He *ſet before* the Inhabitants of Glory, but *the Earth hath he given to the Children of Men* †——— Having given Us Ourſelves; given Us a World; has He not a Right, a moſt unqueſtionable and unrivaled Right, to make that tender Demand? *My Son, give me thy Heart* ‡.

Shall I add another Paſſage? Which, viewed with any but the laſt Paragraph, will be like *the Head of Gold*, eminent and conſpicuous on *Feet of Iron and Clay.* It is taken from the fineſt philoſophical Oration, that ever was made. I never read it, but with a Glow of Delight, and with Impreſſions of Awe. It is, in ſhort, inimitably ſpirited and ſublime.——

* Rev. xv. 3. *Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! Juſt and true are thy Ways, Thou KING of Saints!* The firſt Part ſeems to mean, what the inſpired Writer calls, *the Song of Moſes.* The ſecond contains, what he ſtyles, *The Song of the LAMB.* The firſt, I ſhould imagine, relates to the ſtupendous Works of Creation. The ſecond alludes to the far more wonderful Scheme of Redemption. The former, deſcribing the Syſtem of Nature, is recorded by *Moſes*; the latter, comprehending the Salvation of the Saints, is accompliſhed by *CHRIST.*

† Pſal. cxv. 16. ‡ Prov. xxiii. 26.

You think, perhaps, I act an impolitic Part, in being so lavish of my Praise: and that the Quotation must suffer, by such an *aggrandizing* Introduction. But I am under no Apprehensions of this Kind. Forbear to be delighted, if You can; cease to admire, if You can; When You hear OMNISCIENCE itself declaring, That on the Sight of this universal Fabrick, emerging out of Nothing, THE MORNING STARS SANG TOGETHER, AND ALL THE SONS OF GOD SHOUTED FOR JOY *——The System was so graceful, so magnificent, and, in all Respects, so exquisitely finished; that the most *exalted* Intelligences were charmed, were transported. They knew not how to express themselves on the great Occasion, but in *Shouts* of Exultation, and *Songs* of Praise. Is it possible for Imagination to conceive an Encomium, so just, so high, so beautifully noble! — I am sure, after so much Delicacy, and Majesty of Sentiment, any Thing of mine must be intolerably flat; unless You will except this one Profession, that I am, with the most cordial Sincerity,

My dear Aspasio,

inviolably yours,

THERON.

* Job xxxviii. 7.

LET-

LETTER VII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

My dear THERON,

IF You write with such a View, and from such a Motive, as are mentioned in your last, expect no more *free will* Offerings from my Pen. In this one Instance, I shall think it my Duty to be covetous. I shall act the Miser out of Principle; and hardly persuade myself to part with a single Line, till it is become an undeniable *Debt*. I must turn your own Artifice on Yourself; and lay You under a Necessity of obliging, entertaining, and edifying me by your Correspondence.

For, give me Leave to assure You, that I am always delighted, and always improved by your Epistles. They shew me a Multitude of Beauties in the Creation, which I should not otherwise have discerned. They point out the infinite Power, the unsearchable Wisdom, and the charmingly rich Goodness of the glorious MAKER. Such a Philosophy turns all Nature into a *School* of Instruction, and is an excellent *Handmaid* to true Religion. It makes every Object a Step, better than a golden Step, to raise both our Knowledge and our Affections to the adorable and immortal CAUSE of all.

While I am roving heedlessly along, your Remarks often Interpose, like some intelligent faithful Monitor, who claps his Hand upon my Breast, and says; *Stand still and consider the wondrous Works of GOD**.—— Willingly I obey the Admonition: the *Christian* may, with peculiar Complacency, consider this grand Magazine of Wonders, this copious Store-house of Blessings; and, conscious of an Interest in *JESUS*, has

* Job xxxvii. 14.

a Right to call them all *his own**. He may look round upon preſent Things; look forward unto future Things; and, truſting to his SAVIOUR's Merit, may confidently ſay —— "Not one only, but *both* "theſe Worlds are mine. By Virtue of my RE-"DEEMER's Righteouſneſs, I poſſeſs the neceſ-"ſary Accommodations of this Life; and, on the "ſame unſhaken Footing, I ſtand intitled to the in-"conceiveable Felicity of a better."

Surely then it will be as pleaſing an Employ, and as important a Search, to examine the *Validity* of our *Title* to future Things, as to eſtimate the Value of our preſent Poſſeſſions. *You* have executed the one, Let me attempt the other. —— You have ſurveyed material Nature. It appears to be a fair and ſtately Manſion; void of all Defect; and, for the Purpoſes for which it is intended to anſwer, completely finiſhed. Is not our SAVIOUR's Obedience, the Proviſion made for indigent and guilty Souls, equally rich and equally perfect? —— Since this is everlaſting and immutable; ſince the other is tranſient and periſhable; doubtleſs We may argue with the judicious Apoſtle: *If that which is to be done away*, which will ſoon be conſigned over to Diſſolution, *is glorious*; *much more that which remaineth*, whoſe bleſſed Effects continue to eternal Ages *is glorious* †

We are every One, *as an unclean Thing* ‡. Our very Nature is contaminated. Even Sanctification, though it deſtroys the reigning, does not wholly ſuperſede the polluting Power of Iniquity. So that whatever Graces We exerciſe, whatever Duties We perform, (like the Rays of Light tranſmitted through coloured Glaſs, or like generous Wine ſtreaming from a defiled Caſk) they receive ſome improper Tinge, or contract ſome debaſing Taint. But *CHRIST* was intirely free from this *innate* Contagion. He had no erroneous Apprehenſions in his Mind, no corrupt Bias upon his Will, nor any irregular Concupiſcence in his Affections.

Being

* 1 Cor. iii. 21. † 2 Cor. iii. 11. ‡ Iſai. lxiv. 6.

Being thus perfectly undefiled, *He did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth* *. All his Thoughts were innocent, all his Words were irreproachable, and every Action blameless. The most accomplished among the Children of Men, when surprised in some unguarded Moment, or assaulted on some weak Side, have been betrayed into Error, or hurried into Sin. Even *Moses* spake unadvisedly with his Lips; and *Aaron* the Saint of the LORD, warped to idolatrous Practices. *They* were like some stagnating *Lake*; in which, the Dregs being subsided, the Waters appear clean; but when stirred by Temptation, or agitated by Affliction, the Sediment rises, and the Pool is discoloured. Whereas, *CHRIST* may be compared to a *Fountain*, that is all Transparency, and pure to the very Bottom: which, however shaken, however disturbed, is nothing but fluid Crystal; permanently and invariably clear.

It was a small Thing for the blessed *JESUS*, to have no depraved Propensity; He was born in a State of *consummate Rectitude*, and adorned with all the Beauties of Holiness. HOLINESS TO THE LORD was inscribed, not on the *Mitre*, but on the *Heart* of our great HIGH PRIEST. Therefore he is styled by the Angelic Harbinger of his Birth, THAT HOLY THING† —In the Prophecy of *Zechariah* the Dignity of our REDEEMER's Nature, and the Perfection of his Obedience, are displayed by the Similitude of a *Stone* §, adorned with exquisite Engraving,

* 1 Pet. ii. 22.

† *Luke* i. 35. —— Which is spoken, in *Contradistinction* to the State of all other Births; and implies the *universal* Prevalence of original Corruption, this *one* instance only excepted. For, if other Infants were holy at their first Formation, and made after the Image of GOD, this Remark had been trivial and impertinent, if not droll and burlesque; like saying with great Solemnity, "The Child shall have a Mouth and a Head; aye, and Eyes in "the one, and Lips to the other."

§ *Zechar.* iii. 9. *Behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one Stone shall be seven Eyes; behold! I will engrave the Graving thereof, saith the LORD of Hosts, and I will remove the Iniquity of that Land in one Day.*

graving, Wrought, not by *Bezaleel* or *Aholiab*, though divinely inſpired Artiſts, but by the Finger of JEHOVAH Himſelf; and more highly finiſhed, than it is poſſible for human Skill to equal, or human Thought to conceive.

The whole Tenour of our LORD's Conduct, was a living Exemplification of Piety and Morality, in their moſt *extenſive* Branches, and moſt *amiable* Forms. Saints of the higheſt Attainments, have fallen ſhort of the Glory of GOD; have been far from reaching the exalted Standard of his Precepts. But *CHRIST* failed in no Point, came ſhort in no Degree.——— We formerly obſerved the great Sublimity, and vaſt Extent of the divine Law. From whence appears the extreme Difficulty, nay the utter Impoſſibility of our Juſtification, on Account of any Duties performed by Ourſelves. How ſhould We rejoice then to contemplate the vicarious Righteouſneſs of our condeſcending and adorable SURETY? As the Mercy-ſeat was exactly commenſurate to the Dimenſions of the Ark; ſo did our LORD's Obedience moſt *fully quadrate* with all and every Demand of the divine Law. It flowed from thoſe beſt of Principles, ſupreme Love to GOD, and unfeigned Affection to Mankind.

From theſe two capital Sources, let Us trace our LORD's Obedience through ſome little Part of its illuſtrious Progreſs.——His Delight in GOD was conſpicuous, even from his *early* Years. The ſacred Solemnities of the Sanctuary, were more engaging to his youthful Mind, than all the Entertainments of a Feſtival. —— When He entered upon his Miniſtry; *whole Nights* were not too long for his copious Devotions. The lonely Retirements of the Deſart, as affording Opportunity for undiſturbed Communion with GOD, were more deſirable to *CHRIST*, than the Applauſes of an admiring World.

So ceaſeleſs and tranſcendant was his Love to GOD, that he never ſought any ſeparate Pleaſure of his own; but always did thoſe Things, which were pleaſing in his FATHER's Sight. His own Will was intirely abſorpt

absorpt in the Will of the MOST HIGH; and *it was his Meat and Drink*, refreshing and delightful as the richest Food, or as royal Dainties, *to finish the Work that was given Him to do**.

So intirely devoted to the Honour of GOD, that a Zeal for his House, and for the Purity of his Ordinances, is represented by the evangelical Historian, as *eating Him up* † Like a heavenly Flame, glowing in his Breast, it sometimes fired Him with a graceful Indignation; sometimes melted Him into godly Sorrow; and, by exerting itself in a Variety of vigorous Efforts, consumed his vital Spirits.

So active and unremitted was the Obedience of the blessed *JESUS*, that the Sun did not enter upon his Race with a more constant Assiduity nor dispatch his Business with greater Expedition: and sure I am, that radiant Luminary never dispensed Beams, half so bright, or a thousandth Part so beneficial. — Short was his Span, but how grand and extensive were his Services. So *grand*, that they bring more Glory to GOD, than all the Administrations of Providence, and all the Phænomena of Nature. So *extensive*, that they spread, in their gracious Efficacy, to the Ends of the Earth, and to the closing Period of Time. Nay, they will diffuse their blessed Influence even to the celestial World, and have no other Limits of their Duration than the Ages of Eternity.

Most affectionately concerned for the Welfare of Mankind, He spent his Strength, not barely in relieving them, when his Aid was implored; but in *seeking* the Afflicted, and *offering* his Assistance. With great Fatigue‡, He traveled to remote Cities: and

* John iv. 34. † John ii. 17.

‡ *JESUS being* weary *with his Journey*, ἐκαθηζέτο οὕτως. John iv. 6. —— οὕτως is thus explained by a *Greek* Commentator, ἁπλῶς καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε. Our LORD sat down, *without Ceremony* and *without Complaint*, even on the rough Place: contented to use it, just as he found it neither desiring a softer Seat, nor wishing for any better Accommodation. —— I rather think, the Adverb refers to the preceding Adjective πεπομπικῶς, which signifies

with no leſs Condeſcenſion, He viſited the meaneſt Villages; that All might have the Benefit and Comfort of his Preſence. Though Multitudes of miſerable Objects were brought to Him from every Quarter, yet he was pleaſed even to prevent the Wiſhes of the Diſtreſſed, and *went about doing Good.*

He gave Sight *, and all the agreeable Scenes of Nature, to the Blind; Health, and all the choice Comforts of Life, to the Diſeaſed. He expelled malevolent raging Dæmons; and reſtored, what is more precious than the Light of the Body, or the Vigour of the Conſtitution; the calm Poſſeſſion of the intellectual Faculties. —— What *greatly ſurpaſſed* all the preceding Bleſſings, He releaſed the wretched Soul from the Dominion of Darkneſs, and from the Tyranny of Sin. He made his Followers Partakers of a divine Nature, and prepared them for a State of never ending Bliſs.

Such priceleſs Treaſures of Wiſdom and Beneficence flowed from his Tongue, and were poured from his Hands!————How different theſe Triumphs of Mercy, from the Trophies erected, by wild Ambition, in the bloody Field! If *Heathens* celebrated thoſe mighty Butchers, who made Cities their Slaughter-Houſes; made half the Globe their Shambles; and meaſured their Merit by the Devaſtations they ſpread; how ſhould *Chriſtians* admire this heavenly BENEFACTOR, who roſe upon a wretched World, with Healing under his Wings: Who diſtributed, far

ſignifies a State of very great Fatigue; weakening a Perſon to ſuch a Degree, that He can hardly walk with *ſteady* Steps, or even ſit in an *upright* Attitude. The ſacred Hiſtorian ſeems to mean, that our LORD ſat in ſuch a Poſture, as ſpoke the Laſſitude of his Body; declared the Failure of his Spirits; and *ſhewed* Him to be ſpent with the Heat of the Day; and the Toil of Travelling. Which Circumſtance gives a moſt beautiful *Heightening* to his Charity and Zeal, ſo generouſly and ſo ſucceſsfully exerted in the following Converſation.

* Εχαρισατο το βλεπειν, is the delicate and noble Expreſſion of the Evangeliſt, *Luke* vii. 21. *He made them a Preſent of Sight.* Silver and Gold had he none; but theſe were his Gifts; ſuch were his Alms.

far and near, the unſpeakably rich Gifts of Knowledge and Holineſs, of temporal Happineſs and eternal Joy!

Nor were theſe righteous Acts his ſtrange Work, but his *repeated*, his *hourly*, his almoſt *inceſſant* Employ. Sometimes, We hear him preaching in the Temple, or publiſhing his glad Tidings in the Synagogues. Sometimes, We ſee Him teaching in private Houſes, or bringing forth the good Things of his Goſpel on the Deck of a Ship. At other Times, He takes a Mountain for his Pulpit; the Heavens are his Sounding-board; and *all that have Ears to hear*, are invited to be his Audience. — Does he lay aſide this ſolemn Office? It is only to carry on the ſame Deſign in a more condeſcending and *familiar* Manner. If He meets with the *Phariſees*, He diſcovers their Errors, and reproves their Vices; He confutes their Objections, and (in caſe they are not abſolutely inacceſſible to wiſe Counſel) rectifies their Miſtakes. If He vouchſafes to be preſent at a Feaſt, He furniſhes the richeſt, incomparably the richeſt Part of the Treat. *Honey and Milk are under his Tongue* *. He inculcates Lowlineſs of Mind on the Vain †; He recommends diſintereſted Charity to the Selfiſh ‡; and promiſes Pardon to the weeping Penitent ‖. —— Is He retired from *other* Company, and ſurrounded only by his choſen Attendants? His Converſation is a Sermon. Whether he ſit in the inner Chamber, or travel on the public Road, or walk through the Cornfields, He is ſtill proſecuting his great Work; training up his Diſciples for their ſacred Function; and imparting to them, what they may communicate to Others.—Is He retired from *all* Company? Even then He does not diſcontinue his Labours of Love, but adds the fervent Interceſſions of the Night, to the charitable Toils of the Day. Yes, when all but himſelf, lay ſunk in ſoft Repoſe, this ADVOCATE for a guilty World, was engaged in an Exerciſe of Benevolence; which though ſecret and unobſerved as the falling Dews, was far

* Cant. iv. 11. † Luke xiv. 8. ‡ Luke xiv. 12.
‖ Luke vii. 48.

far more beneficial to our beſt Intereſts, than thoſe pearly Drops to the languiſhing Herbs.

Moſt charming and unparalleled Benignity! He *forgot* his daily Food, *neglected* his neceſſary Reſt, to ſpend and be ſpent for the Salvation of Mankind. Neither the Hardſhips of continual Self-denial, nor the Calumnies of invenomed Tongues could divert Him from purſuing this favourite Buſineſs. —— He ſought none of your Honours, coveted none of your Rewards, O ye Children of Men! What *He* ſought, What *He* coveted, was, to wear out his Life in your Service, and lay it down for your Ranſom. This was all his Deſire, and this indeed He deſired earneſtly.—— He longed (beneficent, bleſſed BEING!) He longed for the fatal Hour. He ſeverely rebuked one of his Diſciples, who would have diſſuaded him from going as a Volunteer to the Croſs. He was even *ſtraitened* *, under a Kind of holy Uneaſineſs, till the dreadful Work was accompliſhed; till He was *baptiſed with the Baptiſm of his Sufferings*, bathed in Blood, and plunged in Death.

By this moſt meritorious Obedience and Death, what did He not *deſerve?* What did he not *procure?* He procured thoſe ineſtimable Bleſſings, the Pardon of Sin, and Reconciliation with GOD. Procured them (O! Love unmerited and unmeaſurable!) for Prodigals, for Traitors, for Rebels.——To this it is owing, that We, who were Enemies againſt GOD, may call the KING of Heaven our Father; may have free Acceſs to Him in all our Difficulties; and may hope to reign with Him in everlaſting Glory.

Was

* *Luke* xii. 50. The original Word συνεχομαι ſeems to expreſs the Condition of a Perſon, wedged in, on every Side, by a tumultuous Throng of People. His Hands are hampered, and his Body is confined in a moving Priſon: He is cruſhed, and hurried to and fro: He pants for Breath, and is almoſt ſtifled in the Croud.—— How muſt ſuch a One long to be *diſengaged* from theſe *very uneaſy* Circumſtances! with equal Ardour did our moſt beneficent LORD deſire thoſe Sufferings, which were to overwhelm Him with Diſtreſs, but exalt *Us* to Happineſs; were to bathe his Limbs in Blood, but cleanſe our Souls from Sin. —— Οι οχλοι, ſays the ſame Hiſtorian, συνεχουσι σε και αποθλιβουσι, *Luke* viii. 45.

Was ever Goodneſs like this Goodneſs * ? Were ever Bleſſings comparable to theſe Bleſſings? or purchaſed with ſuch a Price?——Hide, hide, your diminiſhed Heads, ye little tranſitory Donations of Silver and Gold. The Riches of a thouſand Mines, beſtowed to feed the Hungry and clothe the Naked, are the moſt contemptible Trifles, if mentioned with the Charity of the *teaching*, the *healing*, the *bleeding* JESUS. Kingdoms given away in Alms, if viewed with this infinitely noble Beneficence, would make juſt the ſame Figure, as a Spark from the Summer-hearth, under the potent and boundleſs Blaze of Noon —— This is indeed *Love that paſſeth Knowledge.* †

Amidſt all theſe Miracles of Power and of Love, (any one of which would have intitled Him to univerſal Admiration, and everlaſting Honour) how *humble* was

* *Codrus*, it is true, devoted Himſelf to Death for the *Athenians*; and *Curtius* threw himſelf into the yawning Gulf, for the Preſervation of the *Romans*.—But theſe died, being *mere* Creatures, and *guilty* Creatures: whereas, the dying JESUS was perfectly innocent, and ſupremely glorious — Theſe died, only a *little before* their Time: but CHRIST died, though He had Life in Himſelf, and None could have taken it from Him, had He not voluntarily reſigned it.—Theſe died for their valuable *Friends*, for their affectionate *Relations*, for their native *Country*: but *CHRIST* died for Slaves, for Enemies, for the Ungodly.—They died an *honorable* Death: but *CHRIST* ſubmitted to the moſt *ignominious* Execution; CHRIST died under the Imputation of *horrid* Crimes, and in the Form of an *execrable* Malefactor.— In all theſe Inſtances, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, ſo is *CHRIST*'s Love greater than their Love; his *Philanthropy* than their *Patriotiſm*.

† *Eph.* iii. 19. This Expreſſion, as alſo the *principal* Circumſtance of Superiority hinted in the preceding Note, are founded on the *Divinity* of our LORD. And indeed the Expreſſion is ſcarce juſtifiable, the Aſſertion is hardly true, upon any other Suppoſition. A Creature dying for a Creature, is, though great, yet not *incomprehenſible* Goodneſs. But when We view the Sufferings of *CHRIST*, and the Bleſſings of Redemption ſurrounded with all the Splendor of the DEITY; they dazzle our Underſtanding, and fill Us with holy Aſtoniſhment. They appear to be the Effects of a Love, never to be ſpoke of but in the Language of *Wonder*, never to be thought of but with an Extaſy of *Delight*.

was our SAVIOUR! O Humility——Virtue dear to the moſt High GOD, and peculiarly amiable in Men —— never didſt Thou appear in ſo charming a Dreſs, or ſo ſtriking a Light.

At his Birth, not accommodated with a magnificent *Palace*, but lodged in a Stable, and laid in a Manger. —As he advanced in Years, not attended with a *royal* Equipage, or ſupplied from a *royal* Revenue, but labouring with his own Hands, and earning his Bread by the Sweat of his Brow. — When he entered upon his miniſterial Office, not the leaſt oſtentatious *Parade* appeared, in the Performance of all his wonderful Works. So far, ſo very far from affecting the Acclamations of the Populace, that he often impoſed Silence on thoſe unſpeakably indebted Lips, which were ready to overflow with Praiſe, and would fain have been the Trumpets of his Fame.

Though a Voice from Heaven proclaimed Him, The BELOVED of his Almighty FATHER; He diſdained not to own the ignoble Character of the *Carpenter*'s Son*. Though PRINCE of the Kings of the Earth, He condeſended to waſh the Feet of mean Fiſhermen, and vile Sinners †. Though PROPRIETOR and LORD of the whole World, He was content to be more deſtitute than the Fowls of the Air, or the Foxes of the Deſart ‡: more deſtitute (aſtoniſhing Abaſement!) than the moſt *inſignificant* and moſt *hated* Animals.

Grandeur, We find, is apt to beget Expectations of ſuperior Regard: conſequently, gives a keener Edge to every Affront, and renders the Mind more tenderly ſenſible of every Diſreſpect. But our LORD's *Meekneſs* was as great as his Dignity; and that, throughout a Series of ſuch *unſufferable* Provocations, as were equaled by nothing, but the Sweetneſs of his forgiving Grace.

When rudely affronted, He calmly bore, and kindly overlooked the Inſult —— When contradicted by *petulant* and *preſumptuous* Sinners, he endured, with the

* Matt. xiii. 55. † John xiii. 14. ‡ Matt. viii. 20.

the utmoſt Serenity of Temper, their unreaſonable Cavils, and their obſtinate Perverſeneſs. —— When his Invitations, his moſt endearing Invitations, were ungratefully and ſtubbornly rejected; inſtead of remitting, He renewed them; and, with ſtill warmer Affection, importuned his Hearers, not to forſake *their own* Mercies, nor to forego *their own* Felicity. ——— When all the winning Arts of Perſuaſion were ineffectual, He added his Tears to his ſlighted Intreaties; and lamented as a Brother, when ſcornfully repulſed as a Teacher.

Though *his Diſciples* ſlept, ſtupidly ſlept, when his bitter Cries pierced the Clouds, and were enough to awaken the very Stones into Compaſſion; did their divine, but ſlighted MASTER, reſent the Unkindneſs? Did he refuſe to admit an Excuſe for their Neglect? Yea, He made their Excuſe, and that the moſt tender and gracious imaginable; *The Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh is weak* *. — When *his Enemies* had nailed Him to the Croſs, as the baſeſt Slave, and moſt flagitious Malefactor; when they were glutting their Malice, with his Torments and Blood; and ſpared not to revile Him, even in his laſt expiring Agonies; far, very far from being exaſperated, this HERO of Heaven repaid all their Contempt and Barbarity, with the moſt fervent and effectual Supplications in their Behalf. *FATHER forgive them*, was his Prayer: *for, they know not what they do* †, was his Plea.

Nor was his *Reſignation* leſs exemplary than his Meekneſs. He went out to meet Afflictions, when they came in his FATHER's Name, and commiſſioned from his FATHER's Hand. He gave, without the leaſt Reluctance, his Back to the Smiters, and hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting. Though his Soul, his very Soul was penetrated with the keeneſt Senſations of Anguiſh; yet, no impatient Thought diſcompoſed his Mind, no murmuring Word forced its Way from his Lips. *FATHER, not*

* Matt. xxvi. 41. † Luke xxiii. 34.

not my Will, but thine be done *, was his Language; when the Sorrows of Death compaſſed Him, and Pains, inexpreſſibly ſeverer than the Pains of Diſſolution, came upon Him. *When they gaped upon him with their Mouth, and ſmote Him upon the Cheek reproachfully. When his Face was foul with Spitting, and on his Eyelids was the Shadow of Death. When GOD delivered Him to the Ungodly, and turned Him over into the Hands of the Wicked. Yea, When the ALMIGHTY ſet him for the Mark of his Arrows, and brake Him with Breach upon Breach. When the Weapons of his Wrath cleft his very Reins aſunder, and poured his Gall upon the Earth* †. Amidſt all this exquiſite Diſtreſs, He ſinned not by the leaſt irregular Perturbation; but bowed his Head, and dutifully kiſſed the divine Rod, and cordially bleſſed his very Murderers.

Thus did the whole Choir of *active* and *paſſive* Virtues abound and ſhine in our LORD: abound with the richeſt Variety, and ſhine with the higheſt Luſtre, infinitely ſurpaſſing that curious Aſſemblage of coſtly Gems, which ſtudded the *Aaronic* Breaſt-plate ‡; and, as far as earthly Things can repreſent heavenly, typefied the Splendor and Perfection of our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs.

In all this, He acted and He ſuffered, as GOD's *righteous Servant*, and as his People's *righteous Surety*. —By all this, He fulfilled every Jot and Tittle of the divine Law; nay, He more than fulfilled, He *magnified* it. He gave it (if I may apply the moſt beautiful Alluſion that ever was uſed, to the moſt momentous Subject that ever was diſcuſſed) *good Meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over* §.

He

* Luke xxii. 42.

† Theſe tragical Images are borrowed from the Book of *Job*, who was an eminent Type of a ſuffering SAVIOUR; and, though they are the very Eloquence of Woe, they do not exaggerate, they cannot expreſs, that inconceivable Anguiſh, which wrung a bloody Sweat from our bleſſed MASTER's Body, and forced from his Lips that melancholy Exclamation—*My Soul is ſorrowful—exceeding ſorrowful—ſorrowful even unto Death.* See *Job* xvi.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 17, 18, 19, 20. § Luke vi. 38.

He defied the moſt vigilant of his Enemies to convince him of Sin.—A more malignant, a far more ſagacious Adverſary than the Scribes and Phariſees, could detect no Blemiſh in our *LORD JESUS*. *The Prince of this World*, that infernal Tyrant, who had deceived and inſlaved all the Nations of the Earth, *came and found nothing in Him* *; not the leaſt Corruption in his Nature, not the leaſt Defect in his Obedience.

He hath done all Things well †, was the general Acclamation of Mankind: or, as the Words may be rendered, He hath done all Things *finely* and *gracefully* ‡. With every Circumſtance, that can conſtitute the Propriety and Dignity, the Utility and Beauty of Action.

I have glorified Thee on Earth §, was his own Profeſſion before the moſt High GOD. I have glorified Thee, in all that I acted, in all that I uttered, in all that I ſuffered. I have diſplayed the Magnificence of thy Majeſty, the Riches of thy Grace, and the Honour of *all* thy Attributes. Inſomuch, that *whoſo ſeeth ME, ſeeth the FATHER* ‖; whoever is properly acquainted with my Perſon and my Work of Redemption, ſees the inviſible and knows the incomprehenſible DEITY; ſees his venerable, his amiable, his adorable Perfections, in the cleareſt Mirror, and in the brighteſt Light ¶.

GOD alſo, who is the ſupreme Standard and unerring Judge of Excellency, bore his Teſtimony to our bleſſed MEDIATOR. He ſpoke it once, yea twice, and with a Voice from Heaven.—In the Conſtitution of the material World, when it came forth

* John xiv. 30. † Mark vii. 37. ‡ Καλως.

§ John xvii. 4. ‖ John xii. 45.

¶ Therefore *CHRIST* is ſaid to be απαυγασμα της δοξης, *Heb.* i. 3. In other Objects, We have only ſome obſcure Footſteps, or dim Traces; here We have the *whole Glory* of the GODHEAD. And not barely the Glory, but *the very Brightneſs* of the FATHER's Glory; or, all the divine Perfections beaming forth with *adequate*, that is, with ineffable and infinite Splendor.

forth from the CREATOR's Hand, Omniſcience itſelf could diſcern no Flaw. Neither could Juſtice itſelf, upon the ſtricteſt Inquiry, diſcover any Failure in the Obedience of our SURETY. As therefore it was ſaid, concerning the Works of Creation, *They are all very good**; ſo it was ſaid, concerning our SAVIOUR, and by the ſame Almighty MAJESTY, *In Him I am well pleaſed* †.

You took Notice, and very juſtly, how much the Productions of Nature *exceed* and *eclipſe* the Attempts of human Skill. We are pleaſed with the Performances of the Painter: but do they equal the native Bluſh of the Roſe, or the artleſs Glow of a Pea bloſſom? We are charmed with a fine Piece of Enameling; but is it fit to be compared with the natural Poliſh of a thouſand Shells which are formed in the Ocean, or a thouſand Seeds which ſpring from the Earth? We admire the Virtues of the antient Saints; Men "that were honoured in their Generation, and "the Glory of their Times ‡." We admire the Meekneſs of *Moſes*, and the Magnanimity of *Elijah*; the exalted Piety of *Iſaiah*, and the inlarged Wiſdom of *Daniel*; the active Spirit of *Joſhua*, and the paſſive Graces of *Jeremiah*. But what Proportion, put them all together—what Proportion do they all bear to HIS Obedience, *who is gone into Heaven, Angels, and Authorities and Powers being made ſubject unto Him* §? Who is called the HOLY ONE *and the JUST* ‖; not only by way of Emphaſis, but by way of *Excluſion*. Becauſe, no Perſon is worthy of the Character, no Duties deſerve to be mentioned, when *CHRIST* and his Merits are under Conſideration.

If then We talk of Merit, what *Merit* muſt there be in ſuch immaculate Sanctity of Soul, and ſuch exemplary Holineſs of Conduct; ſuch ardent Zeal for GOD, and ſuch compaſſionate Good-will to Man; ſuch conſummate Worthineſs, and extenſive Uſefulneſs? Such as were utterly unknown before; have

* Gen. i. 31. † Matt. iii. 17.
‡ Eccluſ. xliv. 7. § 1 Pet. iii. 22. ‖ Acts iii. 14.

have been abſolutely unequaled ſince; and never will, nor can be paralleled, throughout all Ages!—O my *Theron*! What is the *Drop* of a Bucket or the unfathomable Waves of the Ocean? What is a *Grain* of Sand to the unmeaſurable Dimenſions of the Univerſe? What is an hour or a *Moment* to the endleſs Revolutions of Eternity? Such are all human Endowments, and all human Attainments, compared with HIS Righteouſneſs, who is *fairer than the Children of Men* *; *the chiefeſt among ten thouſand* †; *and who received not the SPIRIT by Meaſure* ‡.

Think not, that what I have written is the Language of Rant. It is a Paraphraſe, though, I muſt confeſs, but a ſcanty Paraphrate, on *David*'s Practice and *David*'s Faith. *My Mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy Righteouſneſs and thy Salvation all the Day* §, *for I know*

* Pſal. xlv. 2. † Cantic. v. 10. ‡ John. iii. 34.

§ *Pſal.* lxxi. 15. I cannot but obſerve that *Righteouſneſs* and *Salvation* are frequently connected, by the Author of the *Pſalms*, and by the Prophet *Iſaiah*. In order to intimate, that the one is founded on the other; the latter derives its Origin from the former; there can be no Salvation without a righteouſneſs, a real, proper *Law-fulfilling* Righteouſneſs——At the ſame Time, I am ſenſible that the Word righteouſneſs *may* ſignify God's Goodneſs in making, and Faithfulneſs in performing, his Promiſes unto *David*. Salvation *may* likewiſe denote the Delivery of that afflicted Hero from all his Perſecutors, and his Eſtabliſhment on the Throne of *Iſrael*.

But if We ſhould confine the Senſe to theſe narrow Limits, how *comfortleſs* the Favour even to *David* Himſelf, conſidered as an immortal Being! How much more *inſignificant* to Us and others, on whom the Ends of the World are come! And how very *unworthy* of that infinite GOD, who is the Father of the Spirits of all Fleſh: who ſees, at one View, whatever is, or has been, or ſhall exiſt; who therefore, when He ſpeaks, ſpeaks to all his Children, in every Period of Time, and in every Nation under Heaven. As much as a Tutor, when delivering his Lectures, addreſſes Himſelf to all his Pupils, whether they ſit at his Right-hand or his left, before Him or on every Side.

Whereas, if Righteouſneſs ſignifies the meritorious Obedience of *CHRIST*, and Salvation implies the Benefits of his Redemption, the Senſe is no longer ſhriveled, impoveriſhed, and mean; but *rich*, *auguſt*, and *magnificent*. It pours Conſolation among all People, Kindreds and Tongues. It is worthy of that GOD who ſeeth the Things, and regardeth the Perſons, which are not

as

know not the Number thereof. The glorious Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, and the great Salvation obtained thereby, He declares, ſhall be the choſen, the principal Subject of his Diſcourſe. And not on a Sabbath only, but on *every Day* of the Week, of the Year, of his Life. And not barely at the ſtated Returns of ſolemn Devotion, but in every ſocial Interview, and *all the Day long*—Why will He thus dwell, perpetually and invariably dwell, on this darling Theme? Becauſe, *He knew no End thereof.* It is impoſſible to meaſure the Value, or exhauſt the Fulneſs of theſe Bleſſings. The Righteouſneſs is unſpeakable, the Salvation is everlaſting. To compute the Duration of the One, Numbers fail; to deſcribe the Excellency of the Other, Words are at a loſs.

And is this Righteouſneſs deſigned for *Us?* Is this to be our Wedding dreſs, this our beautiful Array, when We enter the Regions of Eternity? Unſpeakable Privilege!—Is this what GOD has provided to ſupply, more than ſupply our Loſs in *Adam!* Boundleſs Benignity!—Shall *We* be treated by the Judge of the World, as if We had performed all this unſinning and perfect Obedience? Well might the Prophet cry out, like One loſt in Aſtoniſhment, *How great is his Goodneſs!*—Is not your Heart enamoured, my dear *Theron*, with a View of this incomprehenſibly rich Grace? What ſo excellent, what ſo comfortable, what ſo deſirable as this Gift of a SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs? Though delineated by this *feeble* Pen, methinks, it has Dignity and Glory enough, to captivate our Hearts and fire our Affections: fire them with ardent and inextinguiſhable Deſires after a perſonal Intereſt and Propriety in

as though they were. It comports exactly with that Revelation, in which *CHRIST* is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the Ending, the Sum total.

This Note is already too long; otherwiſe I ſhould take leave to gratify my Inclination, and give a Sanction to my Sentiment, by tranſcribing *Vitringa*'s Expoſition of *Iſai.* xlv. 8.

in it.—— O! may the eternal SPIRIT reveal our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs, in all its heavenly Beauty and divine Luſtre! Then, I am ſure, We ſhall eſteem it above *every thing*; We ſhall regard it as the *One Thing* needful; We ſhall count *all Things* in compariſon of it, worthleſs as the Chaff, and empty as the Wind.

To an immortal and fallen Soul, every Thing elſe is empty as the Wind; but here Sinners may *ſuck*, and *be ſatisfied with this Breaſt of Conſolations:* yea Thouſands and Thouſands of Millions may *milk out, and be delighted with the Abundance of its Glory* *—Here we ſhall find the Doctrine of *Supererogation*, no longer a Chimæra, but a delightful Reality. Here indeed is an immenſe Surpluſage, an inexhauſtible Fund of Merit †, ſufficient to enrich a whole World of indigent and miſerable Creatures: ſufficient to make their Cup run over with a ſuperabundant Fulneſs of Peace and Joy, ſo long as Time ſhall laſt, and when Time ſhall be no more. For, to uſe the Apoſtle's weighty Argument, *If by one Man's Offence, Death reigned by one; much more they which receive Abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in Life by one* JESUS CHRIST‡. If *one* Offence, committed by one *mere* Man, made all his Poſterity chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Death: HOW MUCH MORE ſhall the *manifold* Inſtances of our *Divine* REDEEMER's Obedience; of his long, uninterrupted, conſummate Righteouſneſs;—how much more ſhall they abſolve all his People from Condemnation and Puniſhment, and intitle them to the Honours and Joys of Immortality!

Which

* Iſai. lxvi. 11.

† Yet here is no *rich Fund* (as a learned Writer aſſerts) no Fund at all, *for the Pope's Treaſury of meritorious ſupererogating Actions:* unleſs CHRIST and the *Pope* are to be placed upon the ſame Footing; unleſs the ineffably excellent Obedience of a Divine REDEEMER, and the miſerably defective Duties of ſinful Men, are to be deemed equally valuable.—Since this will hardly be admitted by *Proteſtants*; I believe, *Aſpaſio* may ſafely call the Obedience of CHRIST, *The true Supererogation*; as Mr. *Ambroſe* has called the Blood of CHRIST, *The true Purgatory.*

‡ Rom. v. 17.

Which will appear in a clearer Light, if to the Perfection of his Obedience, We add the *Majesty of* his *Person*. A proper Subject this, for some future Letter.—In the mean Time, let me desire my Friend, the Friend of my Bosom, to contemplate our *LORD JESUS* under that lovely and august Character, GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS* And for my Part, I will not cease to pray, that a Sense of this supereminently grand and precious Righteousness may be written on my *Theron*'s Heart.—On those living Tables, may it be like Figures cut on a Rock of solid Marble, or inscribed on the Bark of a growing Tree; be *lasting* in its Duration as the former, and *spreading* in its Influence as the latter.—It will then be a sure Proof, that his Name is written in the Book of Life; and it shall then be a pleasing Pattern for

the Affection,

the Gratitude,

and the Friendship, of

his ASPASIO.

P. S. You give a most astonishing Account of the *Pressure* of the Atmosphere. Astonishing indeed! That we should be continually surrounded, continually overwhelmed, with such a tremendous Load; and not be crushed to death, no, nor be sensible of the least Weight. —This, I think, may serve to represent the State of a Sinner, *unawakened* from carnal Security. Loads, more than *mountainous Loads* of Guilt, are upon his Soul, and He perceives not the Burden. For this Reason, He is under no Apprehensions of the Vengeance and fiery Indignation, which He deserves; He has no superlative Esteem for the Atonement and Merits of the REDEEMER which alone can deliver Him from the Wrath to come. But, if once his

* Exod. xv. 11.

his Conſcience *feels*, what his Lips, perhaps, have often repeated; "We do earneſtly repent Us of theſe our Miſdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto Us, the Burden of them is intolerable;" then how will He prize ſuch a Text: *The LORD laid on CHRIST the Iniquity of Us all!* How will He long for an Intereſt in the LAMB of GOD, *which taketh away the Sin of the World!* Then, that *JESUS* who has *finiſhed the Tranſgreſſion, and brought in everlaſting Righteouſneſs*, will be all his Salvation, and all his deſire.

LETTER VIII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I HAVE juſt been reading that exquiſitely fine Piece of ſacred Hiſtory, *The Life of Joſeph*. A Hiſtory—filled with ſurprizing Incidents, and unexpected Revolutions—adorned with the moſt heroic Inſtances of triumphant Virtue, both amidſt the Allurements of Temptation, and under the Preſſures of Affliction—animated with ſuch tender and pathetic, ſuch melting and alarming Touches of natural Eloquence, as every Reader muſt *feel*, and every true Critic will *admire*.

When I came to that remarkable Injunction, with which the generous Viceroy diſmiſſed his Brethren; *Ye ſhall tell my Father of all my Glory in Egypt* *——I paused—I pondered—I was ſtruck. Certainly, this was injoined, not by way of Oſtentation; but on account of the Pleaſure, which, He knew it would yield the good old Patriarch.—Was it ſome kind prompting Angel, or the Voice of Gratitude and Devotion, that whiſpered

* Gen. xlv. 1.

whiſpered in my Ear? "Should not the Children "of Men likewiſe tell one another of *all the Glory* *, "which their REDEEMER poſſeſſes in Heaven "and on Earth? Will not this afford them the ſub- "limeſt Pleaſure Here, and be a Source of the moſt "refined Satisfaction for ever and ever?"

Though I had almoſt determined to write no more, till You could make a Demand, upon the Foot of *Value received*; willingly I recede from my intended Reſolution, and obey this pleaſing Hint.—But *who can declare the noble Acts of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, or ſhew forth all his Praiſe?*—However, if I may but *liſp out* his adorable Name, and preſent my Friend with a *Glimpſe*, or a *broken* View of his divine Perfections, even this will be deſirable and delightful. Far more deſirable and delightful, than to behold *Rome* in its Magnificence, St. *Paul* in the Pulpit, or King *Solomon* on his Throne †.

Let me take the *Lark* for my Pattern; which, as I was lately returning from an Evening Ramble, attracted my Obſervation.—Warbling her CREATOR's Praiſe, ſhe mounted in the ſerene Sky. Still ſhe

* *To ſee the Glory of CHRIST*, is the grand Bleſſing, which our LORD ſolicits and demands for his Diſciples, in his laſt ſolemn Interceſſion. *John* xvii. 24. It is that, which will complete the Bleſſedneſs of Heaven; and fills its Inhabitants with Joy unſpeakable and glorious.—Surely, then, We ſhould endeavour to *anticipate*, in ſome Degree, that celeſtial Bliſs: and *habituate* our Souls to this ſacred Exerciſe, which will be our Buſineſs and our Reward to endleſs Ages.

Should the Reader deſire aſſiſtance in this important Work, I would refer Him to a little Treatiſe of Dr. *Owen*'s, intitled, *Meditations on the Glory of CHRIST*:—'Tis little in Size, not ſo in Value. Was I to ſpeak of it, in the claſſical Style, I ſhould call it, *aureus, gemmeus, mellitus*. But I would rather ſay, it is richly repleniſhed with that *Unction from the HOLY ONE*, which tends to inlighten the Eyes, and chear the Heart; which ſweetens the Enjoyments of Life, ſoftens the Horrors of Death, and prepares for the Fruitions of Eternity.

† Theſe, if I remember right, are the three Things, which St. *Auguſtine* declared, would of all others, moſt eminently gratify his *Curioſity*.

ſhe warbled, and ſtill ſhe mounted, as though ſhe meant to carry her Tribute of Harmony unto the very Gates of Heaven. Having reached, at laſt, her higheſt Elevation, and perceiving herſelf at an immenſe Diſtance from the ſtarry Manſions, ſhe dropped on a ſudden to the Earth; and diſcontinued, at once, both to ſing, and to ſoar. Now the Morning appears, and is awaking the World, our little Songſter returns her Throat, and re-exerts her Wings.—As I have endeavoured, very imperfectly endeavoured, to ſtrike out a *ſhadowy* Draught of our LORD's complete Obedience; I would, though unequal to the Taſk, once more reſume my Pen, and attempt— nothing like a Diſplay, but only a faint *Sketch* of his *eſſential Dignity*.

Firſt let me obſerve, that for ſome Time paſt, We have been viſited with the moſt uncomfortable Weather; *dewleſs Nights*, and *ſultry Days*. The Firmament was more like a glowing Furnace, than the Region of refreſhing Rain.—The earth lay *parched* with Thriſt, and *chapped* with Heat. The Meadows were drained of their humidity, and all the Flowers hung their fading Heads.—The Streams which uſed to flow parallel with the verdant Margin, abandoned their Banks; and ſunk, diminiſhed and diſcoloured, to the Bottom of their oozy Channels.—Nature in general ſeemed to be reſigning the "Robe of beauty, for the "Garment of Heavineſs." *Drought* was in all our Borders; and *Famine*, We feared, was not far behind.—Though Clouds of Duſt, obſcured the Air; tarniſhed the Hedges; and almoſt ſmothered the Traveller: yet not one Cloud of *fleecy White* appeared, to variegate the blue Expanſe, or give Us Hopes of a reviving Shower*.

* At ſuch a Juncture, how pertinent is the Queſtion, propoſed by the Almighty MAJESTY? *Job* xxxviii. 37, 38. *Who can number*, muſter or arrange, *the Clouds in Wiſdom?* So as to have them ready at hand, on any Emergency. *And who can empty thoſe Bottles of Heaven*, in copious but ſeaſonable Effuſions upon the Earth; *When*, as in the Caſe deſcribed above, *the Duſt* of the

It reminded me of that awful Threatning, denounced by *Moſes* on a wicked People; *The Heaven, that is over thy Head, ſhall be Braſs; and the Earth, that is under Thee, ſhall be Iron* *.—It made me apprehenſive of that terrible State, which the Prophet ſo emphatically deſcribes; *The field is waſted and the Land mourneth. The Seed is rotten under the Clods, and the Harveſt periſheth. The Garners are laid deſolate, and the Barns are broken down.—The new Wine is dried up; the Oil languiſheth; and all the Trees of the Field are withered.—How do the Beaſts groan! The Herds of Cattle are perplexed. Yea, the Flocks of Sheep are made deſolate. Becauſe the Rivers of Waters are dried up, and the Fire hath devoured the Paſtures of the Wilderneſs* †. But, bleſſed be the Divine PROVIDENCE, our Fears are vaniſhed, and a moſt joyful Change has taken place. The LORD hath *ſent a gracious Rain upon his Inheritance, and refreſhed it, when it was weary* ‡.

Yeſterday in the Afternoon, the Wind ſhifting to the South, rouſed the *dormant* Clouds, and brought ſome of thoſe agreeable Strangers on its Wings.—At firſt, they came ſailing in ſmall, and thin, and ſcattered Parties. Anon, the flying Squadrons advanced in larger detachments, more *cloſely* wedged and more *deeply* laden. Till at laſt, the great Rendezvous completed, they formed into a Body of ſuch Depth, and extended their Wings with ſuch a Sweep, as darkened the Sun, and overſpread the whole Hemiſphere.

Juſt at the Cloſe of Day, the Gales which eſcorted the ſpongy Treaſures, retired; and conſigned their Charge to the Diſpoſal of a profound *Calm*. Not a Breeze ſhook the moſt tremulous Leaf. Not a Curl ruffled the ſmooth expanſive Lake. All Things were ſtill, as in *attentive Expectation*. The Earth ſeemed to gaſp after the hovering Moiſture. Nature, with

the Roads *is attenuated into Powder*, בצקת למוצק *and the Clods* of the Valley *are glued faſt together*. ידבקו

* Deut. xxviii. 23. † Joel. i. 10, &c. ‡ Pſal. lxviii. 9.

with her ſuppliant Tribes, in expreſſive pleading Silence, ſolicited the falling Fruitfulneſs. Nor pleaded long, nor ſolicited in vain.

The *Showers*, gentle, ſoft, and balmy, deſcend. The Veſſels of Heaven unload their precious Freight, and enrich the penurious Glebe. Through all the Night, the liquid Sweetneſs, incomparably more beneficial than trickling Silver, diſtils; ſhedding Herbs and Fruits, and Flowers.—Now the Sun, *mild* and *refulgent*, iſſues through the Portals of the Eaſt. Pleaſed, as it were, to have emerged from the late aggravated, Darkneſs, He looks abroad with peculiar Gaiety, and the moſt engaging Splendors. He looks through the diſburdened Air, and finds a gladdened World, that wants nothing but his *all chearing* Beams, to render its Satisfaction complete.

The Glory comes!——Hail to thy riſing Ray,
Great Lamp of Light, and ſecond Source of Day!
Who robe the World, each nipping Gale remove,
Treat every Senſe, and beam creating Love *.

At his auſpicious Approach, the freſhened Mountains lift their Heads, and ſmile. The Garden opens its aromatic Stores; and breathes, as from a fuming Altar, Balm to the Smell, and incenſe to the Skies. The little Hills, crowned with ſpringing Plenty, *clap their Hands* on every Side. The moiſtened Plains, and irriguous Valleys, *laugh and ſing*. While their Waters, lately exhauſted, again *are made deep*, and *their Rivers run like Oil* †.

The whole Earth, *ſaturated* with the Bounty of Heaven, and *fluſhed* with humid Life, wears a thouſand Marks of Gratitude and Complacency. Waſhed by the copious Rain, how bright and vivid is the univerſal Verdure! The *green Carpet* below, may almoſt vie with the *blue Canopy* above.—The Foreſt,

* Theſe beautiful Lines are borrowed from the SEA-PIECE, Canto IV. A *narratory*, *philoſophical*, and *deſcriptive* Poem, written by my ingenious Friend, Dr. *Kirkpatrick*.

† Ezek. xxxii. 14.

and every Tree, burniſh their Colours, and array themſelves in their fineſt Apparel. Which as on a Day of general Feſtivity, is delicately decked with Gems: Gems of unſullied Luſtre, and of genial Moiſture — From every Paſture and from all the Grove the Voice of *Pleaſure* and of *Melody* reſounds. While the officious Zephyrs waft the floating Harmony, blended with native Perfumes; gently waft them to the Senſes, and touch the very Soul with Tranſport.

Could there be a more brilliant Appearance, or more exuberant Demonſtrations of Joy, even to celebrate the Anniverſary of *Nature's Birth?* With what admirable Propriety has the *Pſalmiſt* compared yonder orient Sun, in all his ſparkling Grandeur, to a young exulting *Bridegroom* *; who comes forth, with every heightened Ornament from his Chamber, to ſhew Himſelf in the moſt diſtinguiſhed Period of His Life, and to receive the Bleſſing which conſummates his Happineſs!

This moſt charming and equally majeſtic Scene, recals to my Memory that fine Deſcription of the MESSIAH, extant in the laſt lovely Strains of the *Iſraelitiſh Swan* †—*HE ſhall be* welcome and ſalutary *as the Light of the Morning*; *when the Sun ariſeth*, to chaſe the malignant Shades, and pour Day through the reviving World. He ſhall be as the Light of *a Morning*, that is moſt ſerenely fair; *without* either Storms to diſturb, or *Clouds* to obſcure the glorious, the delightful Dawn. Yea, his Appearance ſhall be *more beautiful*, and his influences *more beneficial* §, *than the clear ſhining* of that grand Luminary, *after* a Night

* Pſal. xix. 5.

† *Iſraelitiſh Swan*—In Alluſion to thoſe well-known Lines of the Poet,

Multa Dirtæum levat Aura Cygnum.

And not without a Reference to the *popular* Notion, that the Swan ſings the moſt melodious Notes in its laſt Moments. *Fuit hæc facundi Senis quaſi cygnea Vox.* TULLY.

§ *More beautiful, more beneficial, than the clear Shining*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.—Thus We have ventured to tranſlate, or rather to paraphraſe

Night of ſettled Gloom, and Showers of inceſſant *Rain*. When his Beams ſhed animating Warmth, and vital Luſtre, *on the* tender *Graſs* impearled with Dews, and on all the green Treaſures *of the* teeming *Earth*.

As we have already contemplated the bleſſed *JESUS*, under the amiable Character of the JUST ONE; the foregoing Paſſage of Scripture repreſents Him to our Faith, in the more majeſtic Quality of THE LORD OF GLORY.——Or rather, unites the two grand Peculiarities, which render Him *unparallelled* in his perſonal, and *all-ſufficient* in his mediatorial Capacity.

Great, unſpeakably great and glorious would our SAVIOUR appear; if We had no other Manifeſtations of his Excellency, than thoſe which preceded his myſterious incarnation.——In the antient Scriptures, He ſtands characterized, as the ſupreme Object of GOD's ineffable Complacency; veſted with a Glory, prior to the Birth of Time, or the Exiſtence of Things; even *the Glory which he had with the FATHER, before the World was**——He is every where exhibited, as the ultimate Deſire of all Nations; the ſole Hope of all the Ends of the Earth; the Seed, of ineſtimable and univerſal Importance, in whom all People, Nations, and Languages ſhould

raphraſe, the Words מִנֹּנָה. That the Prefix מִ often occurs in the Acceptation of *comparative Pre-eminence*, is plain from a very remarkable Paſſage in *Pſal.* xix. 10 Where our inſpired Author, quite raviſhed with the Love of the ſacred Oracles declares; *They are deſirable* beyond *Gold, even* beyond *the Droppings of the Honeycomb.*

If this Senſe is admitted, we ſhall have a fine Compariſon, and a grand Advance upon it; acknowledging the *Inſufficiency* even of the ſtrongeſt and brighteſt Images, to repreſent the Glory of *CHRIST*'s Kingdom, and the Benignity of his Adminiſtration.—Perhaps, the Tranſlation may be too free and daring, and not approve itſelf to the exact *Critic*. The Senſe, however is unqueſtionably juſt; agreeable to the whole Tenour of Scripture; and can want no Recommendation to the intelligent *Chriſtian*.

* John xvii. 5.

be bleſſed.——In thoſe royal, or rather divine *Acts and Monuments*, He is publickly recognized, as The RULER of GOD's People: Whoſe Dominion is an everlaſting Dominion, and his Kingdom from Generation to Generation. And how auguſt, how venerable, is this SOVEREIGN! Since it was the higheſt Honour of the moſt eminent Saints, and renowned Monarchs * to act as his *Harbingers*. The Splendor of the Temple, the Richneſs of its Ornaments, and the Solemnity of its Services, were the Enſigns of his Grandeur; were his ſacred *Regalia*, intended to uſher Him into the World with becoming State.

Every inſpired Prophet was his *Herald*; deputed to blazon his Perfections, or foretel his Coming. Let Us hear one, ſpeaking the Sentiments of all.——*GOD* the *SAVIOUR came from Teman, and the HOLY ONE from Mount Paran. His Glory covered the Heavens, and the Earth was full of his Praiſe* †. Thunders ſounded his Trumpet, and Lightnings waved his Banners. *Before him went the Peſtilence*, for the Deſtruction of his Enemies; but for the Deliverance of *Iſrael*, *He rode upon his Horſes and Chariots of Salvation. The Mountains ſaw Him, and they trembled; the everlaſting Hills and they bowed their Heads.*

* *Moſes*, for Inſtance, and *Joſhua*, *David* and *Solomon*, were Types, ſtrongly marked Types, of our great LAWGIVER and DELIVERER, of our Divine RULER and PREACHER.

† See *Habak.* iii. The greateſt Part of which ſublime Ode, refers to the wonderful Works recorded by *Moſes* and *Joſhua*. It ſeems eſpecially in the Exordium, to be an Imitation of that grand and majeſtic Deſcription, with which the *Jewiſh* Legiſlator introduces his laſt ſolemn Benediction. *Deut.* xxxiii.——Theſe Works are by *Aſpaſio* aſcribed to *CHRIST*. And, I think, it is demonſtrably certain, that *Jeſus CHRIST* is the JEHOVAH celebrated in the Books of *Moſes*, and in the Writings of the Prophets. It is *CHRIST*, who dwelt in the burning Buſh, and walked in the burning fiery Furnace. It is *CHRIST*, who wrought the Miracles in *Egypt*, and the Wonders in the Field of *Zoan*. The temporal Deliverer, and the eternal REDEEMER

of

Heads. The Abyſs uttered her Voice, and acknowledged his Sovereignty through her deepeſt Caverns; *the towering Surges* * *lifted up their Hands*, and remained in a ſuſpended Poſture, while his People paſſed through their opening Lines.——Indeed, both Depth, and Height, and every Creature, have paid Him Homage, and done Him Service. And ſhall not We, my dear *Theron, ſubmit to his Righteouſneſs?* Submit! Shall we not embrace it; rely on it; and, with joyful Hearts, with triumphant Tongues, ſay, *There is none*, there is nothing, *like it* †.

Do not all Mankind agree to eſtimate the Merit of the Practice, according to the *Dignity* of the Perſon? If a Neighbour of inferior Rank, viſit ſome poor afflicted Wretch, in a coarſe Garret and on a tattered Bed; it is no very extraordinary Favour. But if a Lady of the firſt Diſtinction, or a Nobleman of the higheſt Order, perform the ſame Office; it is a much more remarkable, a much more admired Inſtance of ſelf-denying Charity. On the Foot of this Calculation, to what a *ſupereminent* Height will the Worthineſs of our LORD's Obedience riſe! It will riſe, like ſome magnificent Edifice, whoſe Baſis reſts upon the Center; whoſe Dimenſions fill the Hemiſphere; and whoſe Turrets glitter in the Sky. Or rather it will extend itſelf to Immenſity; where Length, and Breadth, and all Dimenſions are loſt. Eſpecially, if We conſider——The *Names*, He bears; and

of *Iſrael*, are one and the ſame—He is that *Captain of the Hoſts of the LORD*, who gave the Nations as Duſt to their Sword, and as driven Stubble to their Bow. *Joſh.* v. 14.——He is that *mighty One*, who puniſhed the ſtout Heart of the King of *Aſſyria*; who cut down the Thickets of his Foreſt, and lopped his Bough with Terror. *Iſai.* x. 34. He gave *Moſes* his Commiſſion; gave *Moſes* his Law; and was both the LORD, and the End, of that ſacred, ſignificant, myſterious Oeconomy. Compare 1 *Cor.* x. 9. with *Numb.* xxi. 6, 7. See *Dan.* iii. 25. *Heb.* iii. 3. 4.

* רום which, I think, is put in Oppoſition to תהום and forms a beautiful Contraſt. *Ver.* 10.

† 1 Sam. xxi. 9.

the *Honours*, He receives——the *Works*, He has done; and those *mightier* Works He is appointed to do.

The *Names*, He bears——The Title, by which *JESUS* of *Nazareth* is distinguished in the heavenly World; the Name written on his Vesture, and on his Thigh, is *KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords**.——The Description, which the incomprehensible JEHOVAH gives of the Surety for sinful Men, runs in this exalted Strain; *The Man that is MY FELLOW*†. Which the Apostle explains, in that memorable and majestic Clause; *He thought it no Robbery to be equal with GOD*‡——The HOLY

* Rev. xix. 16.

† *Zech.* xiii. 7. עמיתי *Contribulis vel Coequalis. My Fellow*, or *my Equal.*——The original Expression occurs no where, but in this Verse of *Zechariah*, and in the Book of *Leviticus*. In one Text it is explained by *Brother*, or Partaker of the same Nature. In every other Place, I believe, it will be found to signify, not barely a *Neighbour*, but an Equal; one who stands upon the same Level, with regard to the Claims of Equity, and the common Rights of Life.——In either Sense, it militates strongly for the Divinity of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.

‡ *Phil.* ii. 6. Some Writers, I am aware, have endeavoured to interpret away this Evidence of our *LORD*'s Divine Nature. But I think with great Injury to the Context, and no less Violence to the Phrase.

Αρπαγμὸν, as far as I can observe, denotes, not the *Prize* or *Spoil*, but the *Act* of plundering or taking the Spoil; *Ipsa rapiendi Actio.* Vid. STEPH. *Thesaur. Græc. Ling.*——If so, the Text most naturally implies, that *CHRIST* counted it no Act of Robbery; no Invasion of Another's Perogative; but looked upon it as his unquestionable Right, to be *equal with GOD*, and to receive Divine Honours.—*Nevertheless* (αλλα, Rom. v. 14) He was so far from tenaciously insisting upon, that He willingly relinquished the Claim. He was content to forego the magnificent Distinctions of the CREATOR, and to appear in the Form of a *Creature*. Nay, to be made in the Likeness of the *fallen* Creatures; and not only to share the Disgrace, but to suffer the Punishment, due to the *meanest* and *vilest* among them all——An Example of Humility, worthy to be displayed by the Eloquence of an Apostle or the Tongue of an Archangel! Worthy to be the everlasting Pattern, and the everlasting Praise of all Believers.

But

HOLY GHOST, ſpeaking by the Prophet *Iſaiah* of the Virgin's Son, enumerates ſeveral grand Diſtinctions, Both of his Perſon, and his Office. He ſtyles the Child, that ſhould be Born, *The* WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, *the* EVERLASTING FATHER, *the* MIGHTY GOD, *the* PRINCE OF PEACE*. —The ſame inſpired Writer, though eloquent above all Orators, and more ſublime than the loftieſt Poet, cries out in rapturous Aſtoniſhment; *Who can declare his Generation*†? What Pencil can pourtray, what Language can expreſs his matchleſs Excellencies? And may We not with equal Propriety demand; Who can declare the meritorious Perfection of his Righteouſneſs? It is precious beyond Compariſon: beyond Imagination precious.

The *Honours*, which our LORD receives are proportioned to the illuſtrious Characters, which He ſuſtains.—*John* the Baptiſt, than whom a greater Prophet, or a better Judge, was not born of Woman, profeſſes Himſelf unworthy, *to ſtoop down and unlooſe the Latchet of his Shoes*‡: unworthy, though a burning and ſhining Light in his Generation, to perform the meaneſt Service to this PRINCE of Heaven.—*Stephen*, who leads the Van in the noble Army of

But however Αρπαγμος be tranſlated, the Streſs of the Argument, I apprehend, lies upon the Word ισα. If this ſignifies a *real* and *proper* Equality, the Proof ſeems, to me at leaſt irrefragable.——How ſhall We determine the exact Significancy of this important Word? By having recourſe to *Homer*'s Works, or to *Heathen* Authors? This, in caſe the ſacred Writers will decide the Queſtion, is like going from *Jeruſalem* to *Athens* for the Solution of a religious Doubt, even while the College of Apoſtles is ſitting at the former Place——The Word occurs five or ſix Times in *their* Writings. They uſe it, it is true, in the adjective Form. But the Adjective is very ſufficient to ſettle the Signification of the Adverb. If I know the Meaning of ισος, I ſhall be at no loſs to underſtand the Import of ισα.——See *Matt.* xx. 12. *Luke* vi. 34. *John* v. 18. *Acts* xi. 17. *Rev.* xxi. 16. In all which Places it expreſſes, not a bare *Reſemblance* or *Likeneſs* only, but a real and proper *Equality*.

* Iſai ix. 6. † Iſai. liii. 8. ‡ Mark i. 7.

Chriſtian Martyrs, beheld ſuch a Repreſentation of his crucified MASTER's Glory; as enabled Him to *exult* with divine *Delight*, even amidſt the furious Aſſaults of his Perſecutors, and under the violent Blows of his Murderers * Aſſured, that *JESUS* has all Power in Heaven and Earth, by an act of the moſt ſolemn Worſhip, He *commits* his departing *Soul*, that moſt important of all Truſts, to his REDEEMER's Hand †.—Nor by the firſt Martyr alone, but in all Churches of the Saints; and in every Age of Chriſtianity, has the *LORD JESUS* been addreſſed as the conſtant Object of his People's *Adoration*; and acknowledged, as the ever faithful *Depoſitory* of their eternal Intereſts.

When *Iſaiah* beheld a viſionary Manifeſtation of *CHRIST* ‡, the firſt born Sons of Light were waiting around Him, in Poſtures of dutiful Submiſſion. Theſe celeſtial Beings, whoſe very *Feet* are too bright for Mortals to view, veil their *Faces* before his infinitely ſuperior Effulgence. The Seraphs, who are all Zeal and all Love celebrate his Perfections, and cry one to another, *The whole Earth is full of his Glory*,—And is not *Heaven* alſo filled with his Glory? Does not *Heaven* likewiſe reſound with his Praiſe? The beloved Diſciple, in a Viſion no leſs clear and far more magnificent, beholds the LAMB that was ſlain, ſtanding in the *midſt* of a reſplendent *Throne*; moſt beautifully adorned with a circling Rainbow, and terribly dignified by the Blaze of Lightnings, and the Sound of Thunders. Before this auguſt Throne, and at the Diſpoſal of the once ſlaughtered SAVIOUR, are *ſeven Lamps of burning Fire*; expreſſive of the DIVINE SPIRIT, in all the Variety of his miraculous Gifts, and ſanctifying Graces §.—Four and twenty Elders, clothed in white Raiment, with Crowns on their Heads, and the Harps of GOD in their Hands, fall proſtrate in

* Acts vii. 56. † Acts vii. 59.
‡ *Iſai.* vi. 1, 2, &c. compared with *John* xii. 41.
§ Rev. iv. 5.

in deepeſt Homage Before the LAMB. They ſtrike the golden Strings and ſing that ſublime eucharistic Hymn; *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed Us to GOD by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation; and haſt made Us, unto our GOD, Kings and Prieſts* *.

Behold the Hierarchies of Angels: they are in Number ten thouſand times ten thouſand.—*Hark!* They raiſe their Voice, and awaken all the Powers of Harmony.——*Who* is the Subject, and *what* is the Burden of their Song? *Worthy is the LAMB that was ſlain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Bleſſing.*—Nor theſe alone, but every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and ſuch as are in the Sea, join the immenſe Chorus. They cry, in loud reſponſive Strains of Melody and Devotion; *Bleſſing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power be unto Him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever* †.

This, You obſerve, is the devout Acknowledgment, not only of the Cherubim, the Seraphim, and the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, but of *every Creature*—The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, which garniſh the *Heavens*—Beaſts and creeping Things Mountains and Hills, fruitful Trees and all Cedars, which repleniſh the *Earth*—Metals and Minerals, Gems and Foſſils, the ſubterraneous Riches of Nature, or Things which are *under the Earth*—Even all thoſe Objects, which my *Theron* lately contemplated, do, in their way magnify the *LORD JESUS*. They bear witneſs to his Power, as their CREATOR; they are ſubſervient to his Intereſts, as our MEDIATOR; and, in *this* manner, they glorify his ſacred Name.

Under ſuch Views of the bleſſed REDEEMER, inlarged and elevated even to Aſtoniſhment is it poſſible to *over-rate* the Worth of his mediatorial Obedience? Is it poſſible to lay *too much* Streſs on his expiatory

* Rev. 5. 9. 10. † Rev. v. 11. 12. 13.

tory Sacrifice, or aſcribe *too much* Efficacy to his vicarious Righteouſneſs.

To the Honours which He receives, let Us add the *Works* which He has done. By theſe, in the Days of his Fleſh, were diſplayed the Greatneſs of his Glory, and the Might of his Majeſty.

Behold! ſays the Almighty FATHER; *my Servant*, He who condeſcends to become my Servant in the matchleſs Work of Redemption; *ſhall deal prudently*, ſhall conduct Himſelf with all the Dignity and all the Sanctity of Wiſdom. In conſequence of which, *He ſhall be exalted, be extolled, and be very high* *.—— The Paraphraſe of the *Jewiſh* Commentators on this beautiful Climax is, though inadequate, not contemptible. "The MESSIAH, they ſay, ſhall be "higher than *Abraham*, more illuſtrious than *Moſes*, "and exalted above the Angels of Light, even above "the *prime Miniſters* † of Heaven."—What follows, is an Attempt to render this Expoſition ſomewhat *leſs defective*.

Here could You open my Chamber-door, and peep upon your Friend, you would find Him in the ſame Attitude, and under the ſame perplexity, which were formerly obſerved in *Phocion*. Sitting one Day, amidſt an Aſſembly of the People, and preparing to make a public Oration, He appeared uncommonly thoughtful. Being aſked the Reaſon; "I am conſidering, ſaid He, "how I may *ſhorten*, what I ſhall have Occaſion to ſpeak." —The Compaſs of my Subject, would demand many Volumes; whereas, the Limits of my Letter, will allow but a few Paragraphs

Our LORD gave Sight to the *Blind*. He poured Day upon thoſe hopeleſs and benighted Eyes, which had never been viſited with the leaſt dawning Ray.—The *Dumb*, at his Command, found a ready Tongue, and burſt into Songs of Praiſe. The *Deaf* were all Ear, and liſtened to the joyful Sound of Salvation.—The *Lame*, lame from their very Birth, threw aſide

their

* Iſai. liii. 13.

† *Prime Miniſters*, this is almoſt a literal Tranſlation of their Words, מלאכי השרת.

their Crutches, and full of Tranſport and Exultation, leaped like the bounding Roe*. — He reſtored *Floridity* and *Beauty* to the Fleſh, emaciated by conſuming Sickneſs, or encruſted with a loathſome Leproſy. — All Manner of *Diſeaſes*, though blended with the earlieſt Seeds of Life, and riveted in the Conſtitution by a long inveterate Predominancy — Diſeaſes, that baffled the Skill of the Phyſician, and mocked the Force of Medicine — *theſe* He cured, not by tedious Applications, but in the Twinkling of an Eye; not by coſtly Preſcriptions, or painful Operations, but by a *Word* from his Mouth, or a *Touch* from his Hand; nay, by the *Fringe* of his Garment, or the bare Act of his Will.

Any *one* of theſe Miracles, had been enough to endear the Character, and eternize the Memory of another Perſon. But they were *common* Things, Matters of *daily* Occurrence, with our Divine MASTER. The Years of his public Miniſtry, were an unintermitted Series of ſuch healing Wonders; or, if any Intermiſſion took place, it was only to make way for more invaluable Miracles of ſpiritual Beneficence.

Behold

* We have the fineſt Repreſentation of this Event, given Us by the inſpired Hiſtorian, *Acts* iii. 8. *And he leaping up, ſtood, and walked, and entered with them into the Temple; walking and leaping, and praiſing GOD.*—— The very Language ſeems to exult in a redundant Flow of expreſſive Phraſes; juſt as a poor Cripple, who never knew either the Comfort of bodily Vigour, or the Pleaſure of local Motion, may be ſuppoſed to do, when ſuddenly and unexpectedly bleſſed with both. He would exert his new acquired Powers again and again; firſt in one Attitude, then in another. Sometimes to try, whether He was really healed, and not under the pleaſing Deluſion of a Dream; ſometimes from a Tranſport of conſcious Delight, and to expreſs the Sallies of Joy that ſprung up in his Heart.

Though I acknowledge Mr. *Pope*'s Deſcription to be extremely beautiful,

> ——— *The Lame their Crutch forego,*
> *And leap exulting like the bounding Roe;*

yet I cannot perſuade myſelf, that it is to be compared with St. *Luke's* Draught, either in the Variety of Figures; in the Richneſs of Colouring; or in that Exuberance of Stile, which, on this Occaſion, is ſo happily ſignificant, and ſo *perfectly pictureſque.*

Behold Him exercising his Dominion over the *vegetable* Creation. A *Fig-Tree*, adorned with the most promising Spread of Leaves, but unproductive of the expected Fruit, *withers away* at his Rebuke. It is not only stripped of its verdant Honours, but dried up from the very Roots*, and perishes for ever. A fearful, yet significant Intimation, of that final Ruin, which will overtake the *specious* Hypocrite. Who, while lavish in outward Profession, is destitute of inward Piety.

His Eye pierced through the whole *World* of *Waters*; discerned the Fish, that had just swallowed a Piece of silver Coin: and guided its Course to *Peter*'s Hook†. 'Tis true, when the Gatherers of the *sacred Tax* came, to collect his Share for the Reparation of the Temple; He had not a Sufficiency of Money, to satisfy so small a Demand ‡. Yet he takes Occasion, from this most abject Poverty, to manifest the Immensity of his Riches. He makes the great Deep his *Revenue:* and bids the scaly Nations bring him their *Tribute*. Never was such Indigence associated with such Magnificence! And never, never, let Us forget, that the Indigence was ours, the Magnificence all his own!

The *Waters* themselves, it may be said, are far more unmanageable, than their Inhabitants. Who can controul that *outrageous Element?* Which has destroyed so many gallant Fleets, with the Armies they bore; and which would laugh at the Opposition of the united World—The *LORD JESUS* walks upon its rolling Surges §, and speaks its most tempestuous Agitations into

* Mark xi. 20.

† *Matt.* xvii. 27. How wonderful is this seemingly little Miracle! Or rather, what a *Cluster* of Wonders is comprized in this *single* Act!——That any Fish, with Money in its Mouth, should be catched —— with Money just of such a Value —— and in the very first Fish that offered itself —— What a pregnant Display of *Omniscience* to know, of *Omnipotence* to over-rule, all these *fortuitous* Incidents!

‡ About Fourteen-pence.

§ *He treadeth upon the Waves of the Sea*, is one of the Prerogatives, ascribed to the most high GOD, *Job* ix. 8. The original Word במותי signifies a Sea, that rolls *Mountain-high*; and such, We have Reason to suppose, were the Waves on which our LORD

into a Calm. *The Waves of the Sea are mighty, and rage horribly*, but yet the LORD, who loved Us, and waſhed Us from our Sins in his own Blood, *is mightier*.*

The *Winds* are yet more ungovernable, than the madding Ocean. When theſe are hurled † abroad, o ſhatter the Foreſts, and ſhake the Shores, Who can *curb* their Rage? What can *withſtand* their Impetuoſity? Even the boiſterous Winds hear the SAVIOUR's Voice; and, as ſoon as they hear, *obey*. His Voice, more powerful to reſtrain, than brazen Dungeons to confine, chides the furious Whirlwind. The furious Whirlwind is awed into immediate ‡ Silence. That which a Moment ago, heaved the Billows to the Clouds, and filled with Outrage the howling Firmament; now gently whiſpers among the Shrouds, and ſcarcely curls the ſmooth Expanſe.

Something there is, even within the narrow Compaſs of our *own Breaſts*, which affords Room for more ſignal Exertions of DEITY, than the turbulent Billows, or the reſiſtleſs Storm. Agreeably to the Suggeſtion

LORD walked; ſince the Veſſel to which He bent his Courſe, was *βασανιζομενον*, *laſhed*, *battered*, *tormented*, by their vehement Concuſſions. *Matt.* xiv. 24.

* Pſal. xciii. 5.

† This is the literal Tranſlation of that beautiful *Hebrew* Phraſe, which occurs *Jonah* i. 4.—The ſacred Writer, deſcribing the ſtormy Meſſenger, which was diſpatched to arreſt a fugitive Servant, ſays הטיל—The *LORD hurled forth* a great Wind. The ſame Expreſſion is applied to *Saul*, (1 Sam. xviii. 11.) when He darted his Javelin at *David*, with a Deſign to transfix and nail Him to the Wall—What an elegant, and how awful an Image! Storms and Tempeſts, with all their irreſiſtible Fury and dreadful Ravages, are like *miſſive Weapons* in the Hand of JEHOVAH. Which he launches with greater Eaſe and ſurer Aim, than the moſt expert Warrior emits the pointed Steel.

‡ *Immediate*—This Circumſtance, as very much *aggrandizing* the Miracle, is, with great hiſtorical Propriety, remarked by the Evangeliſt. The Sea is known to have a prodigious *Sweil*, and very tremendous Agitations, for a conſiderable Time after the tempeſtuous Wind ceaſes. On this Occaſion, and in Obedience to its MAKER's Will, it departs from the *eſtabliſhed* Laws of Motion.—No ſooner is the Word ſpoken, but there is a *Calm*; not an advancing, but an *inſtantaneous Calm*; not a partial, but a *perfect* Calm. *Matt.* viii 26. *Mark* iv. 39.

geſtion of a Prophet; *For lo! He that formeth the Mountains; and createth the Wind; and,* as a more pregnant Proof of divine Perfection, *declareth unto Man what is his Thought, the GOD of Hoſts is his Name**; the Poſſeſſor of ſuch ſurpaſſing Power and Wiſdom, muſt unqueſtionably be the ſupreme LORD. And Who is this, but *JESUS CHRIST? He knew, what was in Man* †. He diſcerned the Secrets of the Heart; diſcerned the latent Purpoſe, before it diſcloſed itſelf in Action; even before it was uttered in Speech: nay, while it lay yet an unformed Embrio in the Mind.

His Glance pierced into *Futurity*; eſpied Events, in all their Circumſtances ‡, and with the greateſt Perſpicuity, before they came into Being. The *hidden* Things of Darkneſs were open, and the *Contingencies* of Tomorrow were preſent, to his all pervading Eye. Nay, the unthought of Revolutions even of diſtant Ages, the aſtoniſhing Cataſtrophe of diſſolving Nature, and the awful Proceſs of everlaſting Judgment, He clearly foreſaw, and particularly foretold.

Nor does He only *penetrate* the Receſſes, but *overrule* the Operations of the Soul.—— He ſo *intimidated* a Multitude of ſacrilegious Wretches, that they fled, not before his drawn Sword, or bent Bow, but at the Shaking

* Amos iv. 13.

† *John* ii. 25. This all diſcerning Intelligence of the DEITY, is very emphatically expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 1, 2, *&c.* though the Sentiment, in *one* Clauſe, ſeems to be ſomewhat weakened by our Verſion, *There is not a Word in my Tongue*, would have a nobler Turn, and more extenſive Meaning, if rendered; BEFORE *the Word is on my Tongue, Thou, O LORD, knoweſt it altogether.*

‡ *In all their Circumſtances*—— See a very remarkable Exemplification of this Particular, *Mark* xiv. 13. *There ſhall meet you*—not barely a *Perſon*, but the Sex and Age are both ſpecified——not two, or ſeveral, but *one* Man —— not within any given Space of Time, but at the *very Inſtant* of your Arrival —— not emty handed, but bearing a *Veſſel* —— not of Wood or Metal, but an earthen *Pitcher* —— filled, not with Wine or Milk, but with *Water* —— carrying it into *that very* Houſe, where the Preparation was made, and the Paſſover was to be celebrated. —— What a Multitude of *Contingencies!* All minutely foretold by our LORD!

Shaking of his ſingle Scourge*. —— He ſo *awed*, by one ſhort Remonſtrance †, an Aſſembly of conceited and oſtentatious *Phariſees*, that they could neither gainſay, nor endure the Energy of his Diſcourſe. Though not to endure, was a tacit Acknowledgment of Guilt, and muſt cover them with public Confuſion. —— With a Word, the moſt *mild* and *gentle* ‡ imaginable, He ſtung ſuch Terror into a Band of armed Men; as blaſted all their Courage, and laid them *ſtunned* and *proſtrate* on the Ground.

All *Hearts are in his Hand. He turneth them, as the Rivers of Water, whitherſoever He will* §; with as much Eaſe, and with the ſame efficacious Sway, as the Current of the Rivers is turned by every Inflection of the Channel. ——*Follow me*, was his Call to *James* and *John*: *Follow me* ‖, was all He ſaid to *Levi* the Publican.

* *John* ii. 14, 15, &c. St. *Jerom* looks upon this Miracle, as one of the greateſt, which our SAVIOUR wrought. And indeed the Circumſtances are very extraordinary. —— That *one* Man ſhould undertake ſo *bold*, and execute ſo *hazardous* a Taſk — One Man, without a *Commiſſion* from *Cæſar*; without any *Countenance* from the *Jewiſh* Rulers; without any *Arms*, either to terrify the Multitude, or defend Himſelf —— That He ſhould caſt out the whole Tribe of mercenary Traffickers; wreſt, from thoſe Worſhippers of Wealth, their darling Idol; and trample under Foot their great *Diana*——— And all, without Tumult or Oppoſition; not one of the ſacrilegious Rabble, daring to "move the Hand, "or open the Mouth, or peep." — Whoever reflects on the *fierce* and *ungovernable* Nature of an incenſed Populace; or conſiders the *bitter* and *outrageous* Zeal of *Demetrius* and the Craftſmen, on a leſs irritating Occaſion; may poſſibly find himſelf almoſt, if not altogether, of the *Latin* Father's Opinion.

† John viii. 7. ‡ John xviii. 6. § Prov. xxi. 1.

‖ *Mark* ii. 14. He ſaid in the Beginning, *Let there be Light*; there was Light: *Let there be a Firmament*; 'twas ſpread abroad: *Let there be a World*; it aroſe out of Nothing. —— In the Days of his Fleſh likewiſe, He ſpeaks, and it is done. His Word is a Work. He ſays to the Diſciples, *Follow me*; they come —— to the Leper *Be clean*; He is cleanſed —— to the Paralytic, *Ariſe, take up thy Bed, and walk*; 'tis all performed as ſoon as commanded. —— Surely then we muſt confeſs, this is *The Voice of a GOD, not of a Man!* Γενηθήτω is our LORD's uſual Word, when He grants a miraculous Cure: which exactly correſponds with that admired and magnificent Expreſſion יְהִי *Gen.* i. 3.

Publican. Though the first were engaged in all the Ardour of Business; though the last was sitting at the very Receipt of Custom; yet both He and they, without any Demur, or the least Delay, left their Employ, left their nearest Relations, and resigned their *earthly All*, to attend a poor and despised MASTER.—— Their Acquaintance, no Doubt, would remonstrate a thousand Inconveniencies: their Enemies would not fail to censure them, as rash Enthusiasts; but all these Considerations were lighter than Dust, were less than nothing, when set in Competition with *two Words only* from *JESUS* of *Nazareth*. Impressed, deeply impressed, by his powerful Summons, such Loss they counted Gain, and such Obloquy Glory.

He planted Bowels of Compassion in the unfeeling avaricious Wretch; and *elevated*, beyond the Height of the Stars, Desires that lay *groveling* even below the Mire of the Swine. The *Slaves* of Sin He restored to the *Liberty* of Righteousness: and unhappy Creatures, who were degenerated into the Likeness of the Devil, He renewed after the Image of the blessed GOD.—— These were the Effects of his personal Preaching; these are still the Conquests of his glorious Gospel; and do not these declare his Dominion over the intellectual Oeconomy? That the *World* of *Minds*, as well as of material Nature, is open to his Inspection, and subject to his Controul?

The *Dead* seem to be more remote from human Cognizance, than the Secrets of the Breast; less liable to any human Jurisdiction, than the warring Elements. What Potentate can issue a *Writ* of *Release* to the Grave? Or cite the dislodged Soul, to re-enter the breathless Corpse?——Yet this, even this, our mighty MEDIATOR executed. He opened the Eyes, which were *sunk* in their Sockets, and *sealed* in the Tomb. He bid the Heart, that had forgot its vital Motion, spring into renewed and vigorous Life. The crimson Flood, long congealed by the icy Hand of Death; which had not only lost its Pulse by *Stagnation*, but likewise changed its very Texture by *Putre-*

Putrefaction * ; circulates, at his Order, all florid and mantling with Health, through the wandering Veins. —— The *Spirit*, which had taken its Flight into the *invisible* State, had taken its Place in eternal Habitations, returns, at our REDEEMER's Signal, to the Tenement of mouldering Clay ; and by the amazing Visit, proclaims his Sovereignty over those *unknown Realms*, and their mysterious Inhabitants.

As He recalls from, so he admits into, the Abodes of future Happiness. In the very lowest Depths of his Humiliation, He disposed of the *Seats* of *Bliss*, and the *Thrones* of *Glory*. His Hands, when swollen with Wounds, and nailed to the Tree, evidently sustained *the Keys of Hell and of Death* †. Then, even then, He opened and He shut either the Gates of the Grave, or the Portals of Paradise. What He speaks to the penitent Thief, is the Language of supreme Authority ; *To Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise* ‡. 'Tis a royal *Mandamus*, not an humble Petition.

Does our LORD's Superiority extend to those malignant Beings, the Devil and his Angels? ——— Even these, in spight of all their formidable Strength ‖, and inextinguishable Rage, He makes his Footstool. He brake the Teeth of those infernal Lions ; and rescued the helpless Prey, on which their bloody Jaws were closing. At his Command, they abandon their Conquests ; and relinquish, however *indignant*, however *reluctant*, their long-accustomed Habitations : His *single* Command, more forcible than *ten thousand* Thunderbolts, dispossesses a whole Legion § of those fierce and haughty Spirits : drives them, all terrified and deprecating severer Vengeance, to seek Rest in solitary Deserts, or to herd with the most sordid Brutes.

As

* John xi. 39. † Rev. i. 18. ‡ Luke xxiii 43.

‖ *Milton*, describing the Power of the apostate Angels, says ;

——— ——— *The least of Whom could wield*
Those Elements ; and arm Him with the Force
Of all their Regions. Book VI. 221.

§ Mark v. 9.

As the bleſſed *JESUS* treads upon the Necks of thoſe Powers of Darkneſs, He receives the willing Services of the *Angels* of *Light*. They that *excel* † in Strength, and are *active* as Flames of Fire, even they fulfil his Commandment, and hearken unto the Voice of his Words. They graced the Solemnity of his Birth; they attended Him, after his Temptation in the Wilderneſs; they were the firſt joyful Preachers of his triumphant Reſurrection; and now He is ſeated on the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Higheſt.

——They ſtand with Wings outſpread,
Liſtening to catch their Maſter's leaſt Command,
And fly through Nature, ere the Moment end.

Behold Him, now doing according to his Will, in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth—Swaying the Scepter, over the Legions of Hell, and the Powers of Nature ——— Exerciſing Dominion, in the Hearts of Men, in the Territories of the Grave, and Manſions of diſembodied Spirits. Then let my *Theron* determine——under ſuch Views of our SAVIOUR's unequaled Majeſty, and unbounded Sovereignty, let Him determine——whether it

† Would any One ſee a Sketch of the Glory and Excellence of the angelic Nature? Let Him ſee it, in that inimitably fine Stroke of the ſacred Pencil. *I ſaw another Angel come down from Heaven having great Power, and the Earth was lightened with his Glory.* Rev. xviii. 1. The laſt Clauſe is I think, one of the moſt maſterly Touches of deſcriptive Painting, extant in Hiſtory, Poetry, or Oratory. *Milton* gives Us a Stricture of the ſame Kind, and on the ſame Subject. But the *poetic Flight*, though very ſublime, is abſolutely inferior to the *apocalyptic Viſion*.

——On He led
His radiant Files, dazzling the Moon.

In this Caſe, We have a *whole* Brigade of celeſtial Warriors; in the former, only a *ſingle* angelic Being. Theſe are repreſented, as irradiating the *Night*, and outſhining the *Moon*: this as exceeding the Brightneſs of the *Sun*; diffuſing additional Splendors on the *Day*; and illuminating not a vaſt Plain, not a vaſter Kingdom, but the *whole Face* of the Globe.—— If *ſuch* be the Luſtre of the Servant, what Images can diſplay the Majeſty of the LORD? Who has *thouſand Thouſands* of thoſe glorious Attendants *miniſtering unto Him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtanding before Him?* Dan. vii. 10.

it be safer, to rest our infinite and eternal Interests, on *our own* Righteousness, rather than on *His*.

We have selected some few Manifestations of our REDEEMER's *excellent Greatness*. Even the Evangelical Historians, give us no larger a Proportion of his astonishing Deeds, than the First fruits bear to a copious Harvest. Yet, were they all particularly enumerated, and circumstantially displayed, they would appear inconsiderable; compared with those far *more distinguished* Trophies of Almighty Power, which He has decreed, in some future Period, to erect *.

He will gather to his sacred Fold, the People of his antient Church; though they are *dispersed* into all Lands, and most inveterately *prejudiced* against the Truth of his Gospel.——How mighty was his Hand, how illustriously outstretched his Arm, when He made a Path through the Surges of the Ocean; drove the Torrent of *Jordan* backwards; and fetched Rivers of Waters from the flinty Rock! Far more mighty will be its Operations, when He shall remove the seemingly unsurmountable Obstructions, to the general *Restoration* of the *Jews*; shall throw all their religious Apprehensions into a new Channel; and cause Tears of

* The Dignity of our LORD, considered as the CREATOR and PRESERVER of all Things, is not mentioned *Here*: because, something of this Kind, is professedly attempted, in *The Descant upon Creation*, subjoined to the first Volume of *Meditations among the Tombs*, &c. To which I beg Leave to refer my Readers. And shall more than make Amends for the present Omission, by transcribing a Passage from the *Night-Thoughts*; which presents Us with a magnificent Display of this great truth.

——*THOU, by whom* all *Worlds*
Were made, *and* one redeemed; *whose regal Power*
On more than adamantine Basis fix'd;
O'er more, far more than Diadems and Thrones
Inviolably reigns; *beneath whose Foot*,
And by the Mandate of whose awful Nod,
All Regions, Revolutions, Fortunes, Fates,
Of High, of Low, of Mind and Matter, roll
Through the short Channels of expiring Time,
Or shoreless Ocean of Eternity.

Night-Thoughts, No. IX.

of penitential Sorrow to ſtart from their ſtony Eyes, Confeſſions of unfeigned Faith to iſſue from their blaſpheming Lips.——Yet thus it will aſſuredly be. In the Volume of the divine Book it is written, *They ſhall look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn* *. They ſhall adore as the MESSIAH, the once deſpiſed *Galilean*; and fix all their Hopes of final Felicity on that very PERSON, whom their Fathers ſlew and hanged on a Tree.

Amazing Revolution in the religious World! Yet this, together with the Deſtruction of *Antichriſt*, and the Illumination of the benighted *Gentiles*, may paſs for *ſmall* Incidents; compared with thoſe ſtupendous Events, which will dignify, and ſignalize the cloſing Scene of Affairs.

Then, ſhall the *LORD JESUS* be manifeſted in unſpeakable Glory; and exert ſuch Acts of Omnipotence, as will be the *Terror* of Hell, the *Joy* of Heaven, the *Wonder* of Eternity.—Then, will He put an end to time, and bid the Springs of Nature ceaſe to operate. Then ſhall his tremendous Trumpet rend the univerſal Vault, and pierce the Dormitories of the Dead.——Then, will He *ſhake the Earth out of its Place* †, and before his majeſtic Preſence the *Heavens ſhall flee away* §.——Then ſhall, not *a Nation* only

* Zech. xii. 10. † Job ix. 6.

§ How grand is the Idea, when *David* prays! *Bow thy Heavens, O LORD, and come down; touch the Mountains, and they ſhall ſmoke.*——Much grander is the Image, when he ſays; *The Springs of Waters were ſeen, and the Foundations of the World were diſcovered, at thy Chiding, O LORD, at the Blaſt of the Breath of thy Diſpleaſure.*——Tranſcendently and inimitably grand is *this* Deſcription, though given Us by the moſt plain and artleſs Writer in the World; *I ſaw a great white Throne, and HIM THAT SAT ON IT, from whoſe Face the Heavens and the Earth fled away, and there was no Place found for them.* Rev. xx. 11.

In *Virgil*'s admired Repreſentation, *Jupiter* hurls his Thunder and a Mountain falls at the Stroke;

——————————*Ille flagranti*
Aut Athо, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia Telo
Dejicit. Georg. I 331.

In *Homer*'s more terror-ſtriking Piece, *Neptune* ſhakes the wide extended Earth. The Mountains tremble to their Center; the

only but Multitudes, Multitudes of Nations, *be born in a Day* * ; yea rather, in an Hour, in a moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye.——All that are asleep in the Beds of Death; even those who, perishing in *Tempests*, are sunk to the Bottom of the Ocean; or, swallowed up by *Earthquakes*, are buried at the Center of the Globe; all shall hear his Voice; and hearing shall awake; and awaking, shall come forth.——Every human Body, though *Ages* have revolved, since it gave up the ghost; though *Worms* have devoured the Flesh, and Dissolution mouldered the Bones; though its Parts have been *grinded* by the Teeth of Beasts, or *consumed* by the Rage of Fire; dissipated in *view-*

the Occean heaves its Billows; and Cities reel on their Foundations.

——————Αυταρ ενερθε Ποσειδαων ετιναξε
Γαιαν απειρεσιην, ορεων τ' αιπεινα καρηνα,
Παντες δ' εσσειοντο ποδες πολυπιδακȣ Ιδης
Και κορυφαι, Τρωωντε πολις, ϗ νηες Αχαιων.

Iliad. Υ. 57.

Here, the SON of the eternal GOD *appears* only, and all Nature is alarmed, nor Heaven nor Earth can keep their Standing: they flee away, like the frighted Roe.——How *groveling* are the loftiest Flights of the *Grecian* and *Roman* Muse, compared with this Magnificence and Elevation of the *prophetic* Spirit!

Let Us consider the Passage a little more atttentively. *Volent hæc sub Luce videri*. Masterly Performances, the more closely they are examined, the more highly they charm.——It is not said—A few Herds of the Forest, a few Kings, or Armies, or Nations; but the *whole System* of created Things.—It is not said, They were thrown into great Commotions, but they *fled* intirely away; not, they started from their Foundations, but they *fell into Dissolution*; not, they removed to a distant Place, but *there was found no Place for them*; they ceased to exist they were no more.—And all this, not at the strict Command of the *LORD JESUS*; not at all his awful Menace, or before his fiery Indignation; but at the *bare Presence* of his Majesty, sitting with serene but adorable Dignity on his Throne.

If this is not *true Sublime*, in its utmost Scope, Force, and Beauty, I must confess, I never saw it, nor ever expect to see it.

* Isai. lx. 8.

viewleſs, Winds, or ſcattered over the *boundleſs* Globe! loſt to our Senſes, and loſt even to our Imagination; yet will every human Body then be reſtored; its Limbs reaſſembled, and not an Atom wanting; its Frame rebuilt, and never be demoliſhed more.

Then, ſhall the unnumbered Myriads of departed Spirits return from their ſeparate Abodes; and, commiſſioned by HIM *who is the Reſurrection and the Life*, reanimate each his organized Syſtem.—— Then, ſhall *Satan* and his Accomplices, thoſe execrable and horrid Criminals, be dragged from their Dungeons of Darkneſs, and receive their Doom at the REDEEMER's Tribunal.—— Then, will Miſery and Happineſs, both *conſummate*, and both *everlaſting*, be awarded by the SAVIOUR's Sentence.—— Then, will He conſign over the *ungodly* World, and the rebellious Angels, to the Flames of Hell, and to Agonies of Deſpair. Then, will He inveſt the *Righteous* with the Inheritance of Heaven, and inſtate them in the Fulneſs of Joy. His Word is Fate; *Immutability* ſeals, and *Eternity* executes, whatever He decrees.

And has *this JESUS*, ſo glorious, ſo majeſtic, ſo adorable——has HE vouchſafed to take our Nature, and become our Righteouſneſs? Was HE made under the Law? Did HE fulfil all its Demands? Give perfect Satisfaction to the *penal*, and yield perfect Obedience to the *preceptive*? On Purpoſe, that the Merit of *all* might be made over to Us? —— Aſtoniſhing Condeſcenſion! Ineffable Grace! What Thanks are due, to ſuch infinitely rich Goodneſs!—— What a Remedy is here, for the Impotence and Guilt of fallen Man!—— What a ſure Foundation of Hope, and what an abundant Source of Joy, to every One that believeth?

It is declared by the Oracle of GOD, That *ſuch an HIGH-PRIEST became US*, was abſolutely neceſſary for our obnoxious and ruined Condition, *who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from Sinners—and made higher than the Heavens* *. It appears, I flatter

* Heb. vii. 26.

flatter myself, from the Letter already in your Hand, That *CHRIST* fully answered the former Character; and from this Epistle, I hope it will appear, That He is the very Person described in the latter Clause.

Estimate now, my dear Friend, estimate if You can, the Glory and Excellency of this Sublime PERSON. Then may You learn, how to state the *Worth* of his Righteousness, and the *Degree* of Affiance suited to his Merits. Rather you will perceive, that his spotless Birth, his perfectly obedient Life, his exquisitely bitter Death, are a Satisfaction of unknown Dignity; *precious**, far beyond all the Graces of Men, and all the Duties of Angels; *able* to save to the uttermost, all that rely on them, and come unto GOD through them.

Consonant to this, are the Sentiments of that penetrating Critic and profound Scholar, Dr. *Lightfoot*. Who, treating of our SAVIOUR's Obedience, says ——"Add to all this the Dignity of his Person, who "performed this Obedience: that he was GOD as "well as Man: and his Obedience is infinite. Such "as, in its Validity, subdued Satan, and in its All-"sufficiency satisfied the Justice of GOD".—After which, our celebrated Author makes this important and delightful Improvement; "Think, *Christian*, "what a Stock of Obedience and Righteousness here "is for thee, to answer and satisfy for thy Disobedi-"ence and Unrighteousness, if Thou become a Child "of the Covenant. Here is enough for every Soul "that comes to Him, be they never so many. Like "the Widow's Oil in the Book of *Kings*, there is "enough and enough again, as long as any Vessel is "brought to receive it †."

We need not wonder, that *Gentiles*, who are ignorant of the REDEEMER; that *Jews*, who treat Him with contemptuous Scorn; that *Professors* of Religion, who deny his eternal GODHEAD; place

* This is expressed by the sacred Historian, with an Energy which no Translation can equal; την τιμην τε τετιμημενε ον ἐτιμησαντο απο υιων Ισραηλ. Matt. xxvii. 9.

† *Lightfoot*'s Works, Vol. II. p. 1258.

little, if any Confidence in his Righteouſneſs. But it is ſtrange, that *Chriſtians*, who know the SAVIOUR; who acknowledge his Divinity; and believe Him to be exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe—it is exceedingly ſtrange, that they do not *rejoice* in Him; *make* their *Boaſt* of Him; and ſay, with a becoming Diſdain, of every other Dependence, *Get ye hence.**.

Such an Aſſemblage of divine Perfections, muſt *warrant*, muſt *demand*, the moſt undivided, and the moſt unbounded Confidence.——There never was, no, not in all Ages, nor in all Worlds, any thing greater or richer, *more* dignified or exalted, than the Obedience of our LORD—Nay; it is impoſſible to imagine, what could be *ſo* ſuited to our Wants, *ſo* proper for our Reliance, or *ſo* ſure to anſwer, more than anſwer all our Expectations.

Remember what the Apoſtle affirms, and you will not wonder at my Aſſertion. *In HIM dwelleth all the Fulneſs of the GODHEAD bodily.* How comprehenſive and exalted is this Deſcription! It collects into a Point all the Rays of Majeſty and Honour. It expreſſes in a Sentence, I ſay not whatever this Pen has written, but whatever of Dignity and Excellence the Bible itſelf contains.—*The GODHEAD*, the very Nature and Eſſence of the DEITY——*The Fulneſs* of the GODHEAD; unerring Wiſdom, almighty Power, and whatever the great JEHOVAH challenges as his own——*All* the Fulneſs; every adorable Attribute in the moſt ample Meaſure, and in the higheſt Degree——All this *dwells*, not viſits occaſionally, but ſtatedly, invariably, eternally reſides——Dwells in CHRIST JESUS *bodily*, with an Union inconceivably cloſe and intimate; inſomuch that the GODHEAD inhabiting, and the Manhood inhabited, make but one and the ſame PERSON.

Therefore, adds the ſacred Diſputant, *ye are complete in HIM*†. Never was any Concluſion more weighty in itſelf, or founded on more ſolid Principles. ——Ye are not only pardoned, but reconciled; and not only reconciled, but juſtified; nay, ye are—— and

* Iſai. xxx. 22. † Col. ii. 9, 10.

and what can be said or desired more?—ye are COMPLETE. And not barely before Men or Angels, but before infinite Purity and Omniscience itself. *Ye are made* (amazing and charming Truth!) *the Righteousness of GOD* * in this wonderful SAVIOUR.—What a Fountain is this, or rather what a Sea of fathomless Depth, to obliterate all Sins, and supply all Wants! What a Mirrour of GOD's stupendous Grace, and ever to be adored Loving kindness!

Here let our Meditations fix, and here let all our Expectations center. From this, not from any thing of our own, let Us derive our Peace, our Joy, our supreme Complacency.—Into this Subject We can never dive too deeply. Of this Subject we can never think too magnificently. The Righteousness of *CHRIST* is the Master-Pillar, on which our eternal Welfare rests. Nay, it is the only Support which preserves Us from sinking into endless Perdition.

There hangs all human Hope: that Nail supports
Our falling Universe.

This renders his Intercession prevalent. He is an Advocate, a successful Advocate with the FATHER. Why? Because he is *JESUS CHRIST the Righteous* † —From hence results his Ability to justify. He shall justify Many, saith the LORD JEHOVAH. On what Consideration? Because He is my *righteous Servant* ‡.—This, and no other, is the meritorious Cause of our Salvation. *Judah shall be saved*; shall escape Damnation, and inherit Glory. On what Account? On Account of *the righteous BRANCH raised up unto David* §. —— Since then our Acceptance, Justification, and Salvation: since our Comfort in Time, and our Happiness to Eternity, *all* depend

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* 2 Cor. v. 21. † 1 John ii. 1. ‡ Isai. liii. 11.

§ *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. I believe it will be needless to observe, that the Salvation, mentioned in this and other Passages of like Import, is not limited to a *temporal* Deliverance, but extends to a State of spiritual and *eternal* Happiness. The temporal is only a subordinate Blessing: a Kind of Appendage to the other; somewhat like the *Halo* round the Globe of the Moon, or that *faint* and *secondary* Range of Colours, which frequently attends the glowing Rainbow.

depend upon the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; how ſhould we delight in contemplating its *faultleſs*, its *matchleſs*, its *tranſcendent* Excellency!—Grand! All-ſufficient! in every reſpect perfect!——Nothing equal to it, on Earth, in Heaven, throughout the Univerſe!——Surpaſſing the Enormity of our Guilt! Surpaſſing the Reach of our Imagination? Surpaſſing all that We can expreſs or conceive! Being truly, properly, abſolutely DIVINE!

And is this Righteouſneſs mine? Is this Righteouſneſs yours, *Theron?* Is this Righteouſneſs free for *every* Sinner? Pleaſing, captivating, rapturous Thought! —Who can forbear exulting and triumphing, in this boundleſs, this infinite Bleſſing. On *ſuch* an Occaſion, methinks, ſome Sallies of Enthuſiaſm, or even ſome Starts of Tautology, are the Language of Senſibility, of Propriety, of Nature. *Sing, O ye Heavens; for the LORD*, the LORD Himſelf, *hath done it.* Our juſtifying Righteouſneſs is finiſhed; finiſhed by JEHOVAH, ſojourning in human Clay. *Shout, ye lower Parts of the Earth: break forth into Singing, ye Mountains; O Foreſt, and every Tree therein. For the LORD hath* moſt marvelouſly *redeemed Jacob, and* no leſs illuſtriouſly *glorified himſelf in* the Recovery of *Iſrael**.—O for the Tongue of a Seraph! —But even this would be defective! ſuch Ardour cold, and ſuch Energy languid.

I have done: I add no more: I leave it—to ſome future Letter? to ſome more laboured Eſſay? No; but to the Hymns of Heaven, and the Adorations of Eternity, to ſupply the Deficiency of my Acknowledgments.——In the mean Time, let me intreat my *Theron* to contemplate our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, under that moſt illuſtrious Character, deſcribed by the Prophet, *A PRIEST upon his THRONE*†. Dignifying the ſacerdotal Center by the regal Diadem; adding all the Honours of his *eternal Divinity*, to the Sacrifice of his *bleeding Humanity.*——Then, I promiſe myſelf, You will find it almoſt impoſſible, not to adopt the emphatical and ardent Proteſtation of the

* Iſai. xliv. 23. † Zech. vi. 13.

the Apoſtle; *GOD forbid, that I ſhould glory*, that I ſhould confide, *ſave only in the* Obedience and the *Croſs of CHRIST JESUS my LORD!*

When You made the Tour of *France* and *Italy*; and, croſſing the *Alps*, gained the Summit of ſome commanding Ridge—When you looked round, with Aſtoniſhment and Delight, on the *ample Plains*, which crouded with Cities, and adorned with Palaces, ſtretch their beauteous Tracts below—When You ſurveyed the *famous Rivers*, that roll in ſilent but ſhining Dignity; ſtating the Boundaries of Kingdoms, and watting Plenty through the gladdened Nations—When You ſhot your tranſported View to the *Ocean*, whoſe unmeaſurable Flood meets the Arch of Heaven, and terminates the Landſcape with inconceivable Grandeur—Did You, then, chooſe to forego the Pleaſure reſulting from ſuch a Proſpect, in order to gaze upon the *naked Cragg* of ſome adjacent Rock? Or, could You turn your Eyes from thoſe magnificent Objects, and faſten them with pleaſed Attention upon a *ſhallow Puddle*, that lay ſtagnating at your Feet?

You, Who have beheld the Scene, can accommodate the Simile, with peculiar Advantage. For which Reaſon, I ſhall wave the Application; and only beg leave to tranſcribe a Wiſh, that is now warm on my Heart, and is often breathed in Supplication from my Lips—May the FATHER of our Spirits, and the Fountain of Wiſdom, *give Us an* inlightened *Underſtanding* to KNOW *Him that is true:* grant Us the ineſtimable Bleſſing, *that We may* BE IN *Him that is true, even in his SON JESUS CHRIST. For, this SAVIOUR is the true GOD, and* that Privilege is *Life eternal* *.

My *Theron* needs no Argument to convince Him, that ſuch a Prayer is an Act of *rational* and *real* Friendſhip; is the moſt genuine and ſubſtantial Proof, that I am

His truly affectionate

ASPASIO.

* 1 John v. 20.

LETTER IX.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

YOUR two Letters have reached my Hand; and, I hope, they have not miſſed my Heart. I might inform You, what Pleaſure they gave me, and how highly I eſteem them. But You deſire no ſuch Compliment: You deſire to ſee me impreſſed with the Sentiments, and living under their Influence. This would be the moſt acceptable Acknowledgment to my *Aſpaſio*, becauſe it would be the moſt happy Effect to his *Theron*. May every Day, therefore, bring a freſh Acceſſion of *ſuch* Gratitude to me, and of *ſuch* Satisfaction to You!

To watch for my Soul, and pray for my Salvation, I am thoroughly convinced, is the trueſt Inſtance of rational and exalted Friendſhip. Every Claim to that amiable Character, is *defective* and *vain*, if it does not extend to our ſpiritual Intereſts, and our everlaſting Welfare. For which Reaſon, I need not intreat *You* to continue and perpetuate this beſt Expreſſion of ſocial Kindneſs. Or if I do, it is rather to teſtify how much I prize the Favour, than to prompt your affectionate and ready Mind.

Your laſt found me at a Friend's Houſe, which lies pretty near the *weſtern Ocean*.—Yeſterday, waked by the Lark, and riſing with the Dawn *, I ſtrolled into the fragrant Air, and dewy Fields. While, as *Shake-*

* *Evandrum ex humili Tecto Lux ſuſcitat alma,*
Et matutini Volucrum ſub Culmine Cantus. VIRG.

Lux alma—A lovely Expreſſion! Deſcribing the Mildneſs, the Beauty, and the chearing Efficacy of the riſing Sun. It is, I think, incapable of an *equal* Tranſlation; but reminds me of a very fine Compariſon in our *ſacred Eclogues*, which repreſents the charming Appearance, and the benign Influence of the Goſpel-church, at its firſt Opening on this *Gentile World*—*Who is this that looketh forth as the Morning?* Cant. vi. 10.

Shakespeare with his usual Sprightliness expresses himself,

——— ——— ——— *Jocund Day*
Stood tip-toe on the misty Mountain's Top.

Sweet was the Breath of Morn, and sweet the Exhalations of the freshened Flowers—Grateful were the soft Salutes of the cooling Zephyrs, attended with the Charm of earliest Birds —— Delightful the Sun painting with his orient Beams the Chambers of the Firmament, and unveiling the Face of universal Nature.

My Mind, but little affected with these inferior Entertainments, was engaged in contemplating an Object of infinitely superior Dignity. In contemplating that Adorable BEING, who raised —— from *nothing* raised this stupendous System of Things; and supports ——with his *Word* supports the magnificent Frame. Who (to speak in the Language of his own SPIRIT) *openeth the Eyelids of the Morning, and commandeth the Day spring to know its Place**. Commandeth the Light, by its punctual and pleasing Ministrations, to draw aside the Curtain of Darkness; and discover the Skies, shining with Glories; and discloses the Earth, blooming with Beauties.

FATHER of Light and Life, said my transported Mind,

——— ——— *Thou GOOD SUPREME!*
O teach me what is good! Teach me THYSELF
Save me from Folly, Vanity, and Vice,
From every low Pursuit! and feed my Soul
With Faith, *with conscious Peace, and Virtue pure,*
Sacred, substantial, never-fading Bliss†.

Wrapt in Wonder, and lost in Thought, I rambled carelessly along, till I was insensibly brought to the Shore. Which, in these Parts, is prodigiously high and strong: perfectly well fitted, to stand as an

* Job. xxxviii. 12. † THOMSON's Winter.

everlasting *Barrier* *, against the impetuous Stroke of conflicting Winds, and the ponderous Sweep of dashing Surges.—Not that the Omnipotent ENGINEER has any Need of these impregnable Ramparts. *Here*, it is true, they intervene; and not only repress the rolling Invader, but speak the amazing Majesty of their MAKER. In *other* Places, all such laboured Methods of Fortification are laid aside. The CREATOR shews the astonished World, that He is confined to no Expedients; but orders all Things *according to the Pleasure of his own Will*. He bids a low Bank of despicable Sand, receive and repel the most furious Shocks of assaulting Seas: And, *though the Waves thereof toss themselves* with incredible Fierceness, *yet can they not prevail*; though *they roar*, and seem to menace universal Destruction, *yet can they not pass over* † this slightest of Mounds.

A winding Passage broke the Declivity of the Descent; and led me by a gradual Slope, to the Bottom.—The Moon being in her last Quarter, and the Tide at its greatest Recess, I walked for a while, where briny Waves were wont to flow.——The ebbing Waters had left a vacant Space, several Furlongs broad; equal in *Length*, to a very extended Vista; *smooth* on its Surface, as the most level Bowling green; and almost as *firm*, as the best compacted Causey. Insomuch, that the Tread of a Horse scarce impresses it, and the Waters of the Sea never penetrate it. Exclusive of this wise Contrivance, the searching Waves would insinuate themselves into the Heart of the Earth. The Earth itself would be *hollow* as an Honey-Comb, or *bibulous* as a Sponge. And the Sea, soaking by degrees through all its Cavities, would in Process of

* These, doubtless are "the Doors and the Bars," which the ALMIGHTY mentions in the Course of his awful Interrogatories to *Job*. The *massy* Doors, which can never be forced; the solid Bars, which can never be broke; and I may add, the *conspicuous* Columns on which his Providence has inscribed that sovereign Mandate, *Ne plus ultra*. Or, as the Prohibition runs in his own majestic Words, *Hitherto shalt thou go, but no farther*. Job xxxviii. 10.

† Jer. v. 22.

of Time, forſake its Bed, and mingle with the Plains and Mountains. But this cloſely cemented or glutinous Kind of Pavement, is like *claying* the Bottom of the univerſal Canal. So that the returning Tides conſolidate, rather than perforate its Subſtance, and prevent the Sun from cleaving it with Chinks.—Such, I hope, will be the Caſe, with this Soul of mine, and the Temptations that beſet me. Beſet me they do, they will. But may they never *win* upon my Affections, nor gain *Admittance* into my Heart! Let them make me humble, and keep me vigilant; teach me to walk cloſely with my GOD, and urge me to an inceſſant Dependence on *CHRIST*. Then, inſtead of being *ruinous*, they may become *advantageous*; and inſtead of ſhattering, will only cleanſe the Rock, on which they daſh.

The mighty Waters, reſtleſs even in their utmoſt Tranquillity, with a ſolemn* but placid Murmur, ſtruck my Ear. The Billows, ſometimes advancing to kiſs the Sand; ſometimes drawing back their curly Heads into the Deep; whitened, at their Extremities, into an agreeable Foam. Which, with the reflexive Repreſentation of the azure Canopy, formed the Appearance of a moſt ſpacious floating Mantle, tinged with a beautiful Blue, and edged with Fringes of Silver.—*Dignity* and *Elegance*, I find, are the inſeparable Characteriſtics of the CREATOR's Workmanſhip. As *Comfort* and *Happineſs*, I ſometimes perceive, are the very Spirit of his Goſpel, and the genuine Produce of his Commands.

On one Side, the *Atlantic* Main rolled its Surges from World to World.—*Immenſe*, *immenſe* Diffuſion of Waters! What a Spectacle of Magnificence and Terror! What an irreſiſtible Incitement to Reve-

* This is deſcribed with inimitable Propriety by HOMER;

Βη δ' ακεων παρα θινι πολυφλοισβοιο θαλασσης.

And only not quite ſo beautifully by MILTON;

He ſaid; and as the Sound of Waters deep
Hoarſe Murmur echo'd to his Words Applauſe.

rence and Awe! How it fills the Mind, and amaze the Imagination! 'Tis the grandeſt and moſt auguſt Object under the whole Heavens.—It reminds me of that apocalyptic Viſion, which *John*, the inraptured Seer, beheld! *As it were a great Mountain burning with Fire, was caſt into the Sea, and the third Part of the Sea became Blood; and the third Part of the Creatures which were in the Sea and had Life, died; and the third Part of the Ships were deſtroyed**. I have not Penetration enough, to diſcover the ſpiritual Meaning of this Paſſage; but, I diſcern a moſt *dreadful Grandeur*, in its plain and literal Senſe. — If We conſider the wonderful Compaſs, and the terrible Force of ſuch an enormous Maſs of Fire; if We conſider its horrible and deſtructive Effects, on ſuch a vaſt Body of Waters, as the third Part of the Ocean; how tremendous and aſtoniſhing is the Idea! Surely, nothing but divine Inſpiration could ſuggeſt theſe Images; as none but an Almighty BEING can execute this Vengeance. Who would not fear an eternal KING, that has ſuch Weapons and ſuch Artillery, *reſerved againſt the Day of Battle and War*†.

Spacious as the Sea is, GOD has provided a *Garment*, to cover it. Profound as the Sea is, GOD has prepared *ſwadling Bands*, to inwrap it. Ungovernable as it may ſeem to Us, He over-rules it with as much Eaſe, as the Nurſe manages a new-born *Infant*‡. An Infant it is, before Almighty Power; and to an Infant it is compared, by JEHOVAH Himſelf: though, to our Apprehenſion, it raves like a *ſtupendous Madman*.—But if He command, it opens a peaceful Boſom, and receives his People. It ſmooths the Way for their Paſſage, and ſtands as a Bulwark for their Defence. They march *through the midſt of the Sea upon dry Ground, and the Waters are a Wall unto them on their Right-hand and on their left*§. If he reverſes his Mandate, they drive down, with an irreſiſtible

* Rev. viii. 8, 9.
† Job xxxviii. 23.
‡ Job xxxviii. 8, 9.
§ Exod. xiv. 22.

sistible Sweep, upon the Hosts of *Pharoah*; and overwhelm the Chariots and Horses of *Egypt*, They pour Confusion upon Arrogance*, and disappoint the Designs of Persecution and Cruelty.—If He says, *Be still:* the bellowing Surges are hushed; and the gentlest Lamb is not so quiet. If He says, *Destroy:* even the quiescent Waters kindle into Rage; they rise in their MAKER's Cause; and ten thousand Lions, flung with Hunger, and rushing upon their Prey, are not so fierce. When He bids them execute any other Commission; the Horse broke to the Bit, the Spaniel disciplined to the Signal, are not half so dutiful and obsequious.—And shall *our Passions* be more wild than the Winds, more turbulent than the Billows; Forbid it, Almighty LORD! Thou that *rulest the Raging of the Sea; and the Noise of his Waves*, restrain, subdue, *and* calm *the Madness of the People.*

The Eye travels hard. It wanders over a vast, vast Length of fluctuating Plains †. It reaches the Limits of the Hemisphere, where Skies and Waves seem to mingle. Yet it has scarce made *an Entry* upon the World of Waters. What I here discern, is no more than the *Skirts* of the great and wide Sea. Tracts incomparably broader, are still behind; and Tracts of unbounded Extent, are behind even those — Great then, O my Soul, inconceivably great, is that adored and

* *Arrogance*—This is described with exquisite Delicacy, in the ΕΠΙΝΙΚΙΟΝ or triumphant Song of *Moses*. *The Enemy said, I will pursue; I will overtake; I will divide the Spoil; my Lust shall be satisfied upon them. I will draw my Sword, mine Hand shall destroy them.* —What swelling Words of Vanity are here! The very Spirit of a *Thraso* breathes in every Syllable of this beautiful *Prosopopœia*. Never was the Language of *Bluster, Ferocity*, and *Rhodomontade*, so finely mimicked.——How noble is the Turn, and how exalted the Sentiment, which follows! *THOU didst blow with thy Wind; the Sea covered them; they sunk as Lead in the mighty Waters.* The GOD of *Israel* need not summon all his Power, or level the right aiming Thunder-bolts; He only blows with his Wind, and the great Mountain breaks like a Bubble. All this insolent and formidable Parade is quashed; sinks into Nothing; expires in Shame and Ruin. *Exod.* xv. 9, 10.

† ——————— *Camposque natantes.* LUCRET.

and glorious SOVEREIGN, who ſitteth upon this Flood, as upon a Throne *. Nay, Who holds it, diffuſed as it is from Pole to Pole, in the Hollow of his Hand; and before whom, in all its prodigious Dimenſions, it is but as the Drop of a Bucket.—How ſhall Reptiles of the Ground ſink *low enough* in their own Apprehenſions! What Humiliation can be ſufficiently deep for ſinful Mortals, before this "High and Holy ONE!" Yet how may they *riſe* on the Wings of Hope! How may they *ſoar* on the Pinions of Faith! When, in the Language of his Prophet, and in his own SON's Name, they thus addreſs the everlaſting GOD. *Awake! Awake! Put on Strength, O Arm of the LORD! Awake*, for our Succour and Security, *as in the antient Days, in the Generations of old. Art Thou not it, that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon? Art Thou not it, which hath dried the Sea, the Waters of the great Deep? That hath made the Depths of the Sea, a Way for the Ranſomed to paſs over* †?

How grand, ſurprizingly grand and majeſtic, are the *Works*, as well as the Attributes of an Omnipotent BEING! What are all the Canals in all the Countries of the Earth, compared with this immenſe Reſervatory! What are all the ſuperb Edifices erected by royal Munificence, compared with yonder Concave of the Skies! And what are the moſt pompous Illuminations of Theatres and triumphant Cities, compared with the reſplendent Source of Day! They are a *Spark*, an *Atom*, a *Drop*.—Nay, in every Spark, and Atom, and Drop, which proceeds from the Hand of the ALMIGHTY, there is the Manifeſtation of a Wiſdom and a Power abſolutely incomprehenſible.

Let us examine a ſingle Drop of Water, the very leaſt Quantity, that the Eye can diſcern; only ſo much, as will juſt adhere to the Point of a Needle. In this almoſt imperceptible Speck, a famous Philoſopher computes no leſs than *thirteen thouſand* Globules. Amazing to conceive! Impoſſible to expli-

* Pſal. xxix. 10. † Iſai. li. 9, 10.

cate!

cate!—If then in ſo ſmall a Speck, abundantly more than ten thouſand Globules exiſt, what Myriads of Myriads muſt float in the unmeaſured Extent of the Ocean!—Let the ableſt Arithmetician try to comprehend in his Mind, not the internal Conſtitution, but only the *Number* of theſe fluid Particles. As well may He graſp the Winds in his Fiſt, or mete out the Univerſe with his Span, as execute the Taſk.—If then We are utterly unable to number (which is the *moſt ſuperficial* of all Reſearches) even the moſt common Works of the great JEHOVAH; how can We pretend to lay open the Secrets, and penetrate the Receſſes of his infinite Mind! How can We pretend to inveſtigate the whole Proceſs, and ſolve all the Difficulties, of that *higheſt* and *deepeſt* of the divine Schemes, REDEMPTION!

I have ſometimes been offended, I muſt confeſs, when You have inlarged upon the *myſterious* Truths of *Chriſtianity*. But I perceive, the Beam was in my own Eye, when I fanſied, the Mote was in my Friend's. Is there, in every Ray of Light, and in every Particle of Matter, a Depth of Contrivance unfathomable by the Line of any human Underſtanding? And ſhall there be nothing abſtruſe or profound, nothing but what is level to our *ſcanty* Apprehenſions, in the *great* * *Things* of GOD's Law, and the *glorious* † *Things* of his Goſpel? To expect this, is juſt as wiſe in itſelf, and juſt as congruous to Nature, as to expect—a Sea, whoſe Cavities might have been digged by our Spade—a Sky, whoſe Arches are meaſurable by our Compaſs—a Sun, whoſe Orb may be included in our Lanthorns.

When therefore I read of ONE uncreated and eternal BEING, ſubſiſting in THREE Divine PERSONS; when I hear of an infinitely pure and perfect GOD, made Fleſh for the Redemption of ſinful Men; when I meditate on the righteous and univerſal JUDGE, reconciling the World unto Himſelf, by the Death of his own SON;—when a thouſand curious and inquiſitive Thoughts are ready

to

* רבי תורתי Hoſ. viii. 12.
† Τα μεγαλεια τȣ Θεȣ, Acts ii. 11.

to arise on the Occasion; I will bid them first sound the Depths of a *single* Drop, and then apply their Plummet to the *boundless* Ocean. This, I am very sure, is not weak Credulity, nor wild Enthusiasm; but the maturest Dictate of Reason, and the very Precision of Truth.—Let then the great CREATOR make that sublime Declaration; *As the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my Ways than your Ways; and my Thoughts than your Thoughts* *. Let every human Creature add that humble Acknowledgment; *O the Depths of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out* †! And not Devotion only, but Reason and Truth, will say *Amen* to both.

You see, *Aspasio*, how I am trying to adopt *your* Spirit. You will observe the willing Scholar, though not the great Proficient.——But stay! Is this right? To divert from such commanding Subjects, and take notice of mere Punctilios?——My Friend may spare his Frowns. I am surprized and angry at myself. Away with the little Arts of Self-recommendation. *Self* should be forgot, should be *swallowed up* and *lost* in devout Astonishment, when We are viewing the Magnificence, and meditating on the Wonders of Creation.

Behind me, and far off to the North, *Cambria*'s dusky Coasts just, and but just, emerged. Lost were all her Woods and Mountains. Instead of ornamented Towns, and cultivated Plains, a *confused* Mist, or a low-hung Cloud, seemed to hover on the Ocean's remotest Brim.——*Behind me!* Remembrance is roused at the Expression, and Conscience sharpens her Sting. Ah! how often and how long, have I treated in this very Manner, the noblest Scenes, and the sublimest Joys? Have *turned my Back*—ungrateful and besotted Creature!——upon the heavenly Country, and wandered from the Regions of infinite Delight! Therefore now they appear *dim*. I have scarcely

* Isai. lv. 9. † Rom. xi. 33.

ſcarcely a Glimpſe of their tranſcendent Excellencies: Or if I ſee them by Faith, it is with frequent Intermiſſions, and much Obſcurity.—Turn me, O Thou GOD of my Salvation, turn me from purſuing Phantoms, and attach me to thy bleſſed Self. Let me henceforth ſteer an invariable Courſe to IMMANUEL's Kingdom. May its Treaſures, as I advance, *open* to my View, and its Glories *brighten* in my Eye. O! may ſome Odours, better, far better, than *Sabæan* ſpicy Odours*, exhale from the delectable Hills, and the celeſtial Shores!—But chiefly thou eternal SPIRIT breathe upon my Soul, both by thy *convincing* and *comforting* Influences! Nor ever ceaſe to ſwell my Sails, and ſpeed my Progreſs; till I arrive at *the Land, that is very far off; and ſee the KING*, the KING of Grace and of Glory, *in* all *his* ineffable *Beauty* †.

On my Left-hand, a Range of *mountainous Cliffs* roſe in a perpendicular Direction. The huge Pile extended, as far as the Sight could diſcern, its black Boundaries. Here, bending inwards to the Land; there, bellying out into the Deep; every where projecting a Shade, ſeveral Leagues a-croſs the Ocean.

The *Height* of theſe Cliffs ſo prodigious, that every human Creature who comes near the Summit, ſtarts back *terrified* and *aghaſt*. Only a few ſtraggling Goats venture to graze on the Top: and theſe, to a Perſon walking below, appear but as Specks of moving White. While the Sea-mews, that winnow the Air about the middle Steep, look like winged Animalcules, purſuing their little Sports in a different Region.—The *Aſpect* of theſe Cliffs ſo *wild* and *horrid*, it is impoſſible to behold

* Alluding to thoſe Lines in MILTON.

As when to them who ſail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, *and now are paſt*
Moſambic, *off at Sea North-eaſt Winds blow*
Sabæan *Odour from the ſpicy Shore*
Of Araby *the bleſt, and many a League*
Chear'd with the grateful Smell old Ocean ſmiles.

Book IV. 159.

† Iſai. x xiii. 17.

hold them without a ſhivering Dread. The Spectator is apt to imagine, that Nature had formerly ſuffered ſome violent Convulſions, or been ſhattered by the flaming Bolts; and that theſe are the diſmembered Remains of the dreadful Stroke. The Ruins, not of *Perſepolis* or *Palmyra*, but of the World!

Amazing! What adventurous daring Creature is yonder, gathering *Samphire* from the Cavities of the Rocks! He has let Himſelf down ſeveral Fathom, beneath the black and dizzy Summit.—He gleans a poor Livelihood, from the Edges of Danger, ſhall I ſay? Rather, from the *Jaws* of *Death*. I cannot diſcern the Rope, to which He clings. He ſeems to be ſuſpended over the tremendous Precipice, by a Thread, by a Hair, by Nothing—I'll look no longer. The very Sight chills my Veins. While I view his perilous Elevation, I can think of nothing but a headlong Downfal, and fractured Bones; of Brains left to reek on the pointed Crags, and Blood ſtreaming on the diſcoloured Beach.

Suppoſe (if the Mind can bear ſo ſhocking a Suppoſition) ſome poor Wretch, *expoſed* on the Brow of this ſtupendous Promontory; without any Support for his Feet; and *cleaving* only to a weak ſlender Shrub, which but juſt adheres to the Interſtices of the Rock. What tumultuous Throbbings ſeize his Breaſt? What a dying Paleneſs invades his Cheeks? And what Agonies of Fear rend his Heart? As He hangs, *projecting over* the ragged Precipice; and ſurveys the Ocean deep, wonderous deep below!—— The Bough gives way. His only Hope fails. It yields more and more to his Weight. Good Heavens! *He ſinks! He ſinks!* O! for ſome friendly Hand, to ſnatch him from periſhing! Millions, Millions of Gold were the cheap Purchaſe of ſuch a Mercy—There was a Time, my Soul, when thou waſt in a Situation, equally ſhall I ſay? Infinitely more dangerous. Tottering, not only on the *Verge* of *Life*, but on the very *Brink of Hell*. Remember that compaſſionate Arm, which was ſtretched out, in the very Article of Need, to reſcue Thee from imminent

imminent and everlasting Perdition. Never forget that gracious Voice, which said—in Accents sweeter than the Music of the Seraphic Choir—"Deliver him "from going down into the Pit. Let his Health be "restored, and his Day of Grace be prolonged".

In some Places, the hideous Ruins not only *tower* to the Skies, but *lean* over the Strand. Prominent and frightfully pendulous, they nod Horror, and threaten Destruction on all below. A Person congratulates Himself, when He has got clear of the bending Precipice; and can hardly forbear thinking, that the enormous Load is with-held by some unseen Hand, till the *execrable Wretch*, doomed to a most astonishing Vengeance, is come within Reach of the Blow. And truly, if he had the Strength of the Elephant, or the Firmness of the Behemoth, this must grind Him to Powder, or even crush Him into Atoms.

How awful to consider, that there is a Day coming, when wicked Potentates, and haughty Monarchs will beg of yonder Seas, to *yawn* compassionately deep, and hide them in their darkest Abysses; hide them from the piercing Eye, and avenging Sword, of inflexible Justice.—That there is a Day coming, when the soft Voluptuary, the wanton Beauty, and all the Ungodly of the Earth, will beseech those tremendous Ridges, with all their unsupportable Burden of craggy Rocks, to *rush down* upon their guilty Heads *. If, by this means they may be screened from the infinitely more dreaded Weight of divine Indignation.

Vain are their Cries; and vainer still would be their Refuge, should their passionate Requests be granted. Can Floods *conceal* the impious Wretches; when the Caverns of the Ocean shall be laid bare, and the Foundations of the World be discovered? Can Rocks *secrete* an obnoxious Rebel; when Rocks, with all their marble Quarries, and adamantine Entrails, shall dissolve like melting Wax? When Hills, that plunge their Roots to the Center, and lose their towering Heads in Air, shall start from their affrighted

* Rev. iv. 15, 16.

ed Base*, and flee away like a withered Leaf! Good GOD†! What racking Anguish must they *feel!* What inexpressibly severer Torment must they *fear!* Who can implore, ardently implore, as a most desirable Favour, what Imagination itself shudders to conceive.

In

* This brings to our Remembrance a most sublime Description of the Divine POWER, which arises in a beautiful Climax, and terminates in this grand Idea. *The Voice of the LORD is mighty in Operation, the Voice of the LORD is a glorious Voice. The Voice of the LORD breaketh the Cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of* Lebanon. *He maketh them also to skip like a Calf*; Lebanon *and* Sirion *like a young Unicorn.* Psal. xxix. 4, 5, 6.

The Voice of the Lord is mighty in Operation. This is the general Proposition; which, in the following Sentences, We see most magnificently illustrated.—*The Voice of the LORD breaketh the Cedars*; when He speaks in Thunder, and bids the Lightning execute his Orders, the Trees, the Cedar Trees, those sturdiest Productions of the Earth, are shivered to pieces.—*Yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon*; which, for Stateliness and Strength, surpass the Oaks of the Forest, surpass every Tree of the Field, almost as much as the Oak exceeds a Shrub.—It is a small Thing with *JEHOVAH*, to rend the Trunks, to tear up the Roots, and make those massy Bodies *skip like a Calf*; even *Lebanon* and Sirion, the Mountains on which they grow, tremble before their GOD. They are thrown into strange Commotions; they are ready to spring from their Foundations; and, with all their Load of Woods and Rocks, appear like some affrighted or some sportive Animal, that *starts* with Horror, or *leaps* with Exultation.

† *Good God!*—This Exclamation is introduced on a very serious Occasion, and used with an apparent Air of Reverence. Under which Circumstances, perhaps, it may be *sometimes* allowable, and not dishonourable to the Divine MAJESTY. But, when it is admitted into ordinary Conversation, on trifling Occurrences, and with a Levity of Temper; it is itself a very great Offence, and discovers a very irreligious Spirit.—It is so *great an Offence*, that the GOD of Heaven and Earth declares Himself the Avenger of all such Transgressors. *He will not hold them guiltless*, or he will assuredly punish them. And if GOD condemn, who shall acquit? If HE will punish, who can deliver from his Hand? —It discovers a *very irreligious Spirit*; is a most dangerous Symptom; somewhat like a Plague-Spot on the Conversation. It shews, that there is no saving Health, no Life of GOD in the Soul.

In ſome Places, theſe mountainous Declivities lift their Brow aloft; plant their Baſis deep, and, inſtead of *portending* a Fall, *defy* the Fury of the moſt impetuous Elements. Firmly conſolidated, and ſtedfaſtly eſtabliſhed, they have withſtood the united, the repeated Aſſaults of Winds and Waves, through a long Series of revolving Ages.—The ſacred Writers, I obſerve, ſelect almoſt all the ſtriking Images, which the whole Creation affords; in order to communicate their heavenly Ideas, with the greateſt Advantage. *Iſaiah*, deſcribing the *Security* of the Righteous, takes his Compariſon from the grand Spectacle before my Eyes. *He ſhall dwell on high: his Place of Defence ſhall be the Munitions of Rocks* *; inacceſſible as thoſe lofty Ridges, immoveable as their everlaſting Foundations.

Should it be aſked, what theſe Munitions of Rocks may ſignify?—I find two Places of Refuge and Safeguard, pointed out in Scripture; to either of which, I believe the Metaphor is applicable. *He had Horns*, ſays one of the divine Pindarics, *coming out of his Hand: there was the Hiding of his Power* †. Uncontroulable and

S ul. Was there any Senſibility in the Conſcience, any Grace in the Heart, it would be impoſſible to treat ſo wantonly and ſo preſumptuouſly, *that glorious and fearful Name of, THE LORD THY GOD.* Deut. xxviii 58.

* Iſai. xxxiii. 16.

† *Habak.* iii. 4. *Horns* were an Emblem of *Strength*. *A Horn of Salvation*, is put for a mighty and effectual Salvation. *Luke* ii. 69. *Thou haſt heard me from among the Horns of the Unicorns*; Thou haſt reſcued me from the moſt potent and formidable Enemies. *Pſal.* xxii. 21. Here the Word ſeems to denote that Power of JEHOVAH, to which nothing is impoſſible. And more than ſeems, if We conſult the next Clauſe.—*There was the Hiding of his Power*; or, as it may be rendered, *his powerful Hiding*, a moſt ſecure Refuge, a Sanctuary abſolutely inviolable. I have accommodated this Paſſage to a different Senſe, *Meditat. Vol.* I. p. 183. But the true Signification, moſt ſuitable to the Context, and moſt ſubſervient to the Prophet's Deſign, is, I apprehend, given by *Theron*. It is ſomewhat like an exalted Sentiment

and omnipotent Power was lodged in the great JEHOVAH's Hand; and this was the ſure Defence, this the impregnable Garriſon, for all his People.—The Church of *CHRIST* is ſaid to be *in the Clefts of the Rock**: That *ſpiritual Rock*, of which the *Iſraelites* drank in the Wilderneſs; whoſe ſacred Cleſts were opened, when the bloody Spear tore up the REDEEMER's Side, and cut a wide and deadly Paſſage to his Heart. Surely, *the Inhabitants of this Rock* have Reaſon to *ſing* †. What ſhould diſquiet them? Who can deſtroy them? Why ſhould not the Voice of Joy be in their Dwellings, and that Hymn of holy Triumph in their Mouths? *We have a ſtrong City: Salvation hath GOD appointed*, Salvation itſelf, *for Walls and Bulwarks* ‡.—Happy ſhould I think myſelf, if I was intereſted in this SAVIOUR, and eſtabliſhed on this Rock.

Yonder,

Sentiment in the *Night Thoughts*; which, with a ſmall Alteration, may ſerve as a Paraphraſe on the Text:

And Nature's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.

A Chriſtian's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.

* *Cant.* ii. 14. Should the Reader have an Inclination to ſee this ſacred, but myſterious Book explained, I would refer him to Dr. GILL's *Expoſition of the Canticles*. Which has ſuch a copious Vein of ſanctified Invention running through it, and is interſperſed with ſuch a Variety of delicate and brilliant Images as cannot but highly entertain a *curious* Mind. Which preſents Us alſo with ſuch rich and charming Diſplays of the Glory of *CHRIST*'s Perſon, the Freeneſs of his Grace to Sinners, and the Tenderneſs of his Love to the Church, as cannot but adminiſter the moſt exquiſite Delight to the *believing* Soul.—Conſidered in *both* theſe Views, I think, the Work reſembles the Paradiſaical Garden, deſcribed by MILTON; in which

Bloſſoms *and* Fruits *at once of golden Hue*
Appear'd with gay enamel'd Colours mix'd.

† Iſai. xlii. 11. ‡ Iſai. xxvi. 1.

Yonder, on the Summit of the moſt conſpicuous Cliff, is erected a grand and ſtately Pile. At the Top, my Glaſs diſcovers a ſuperb Lanthorn; at the Foot, are the Huts of Fiſhermen, ſurrounded with various Sorts of Nets —It is, I ſuppoſe, a *Light houſe*. Intended to appriſe the Sailor, of devouring Gulfs, and deſtructive Sholes; or elſe to conduct Him, into a ſafe Road, and ſecure Harbour.

Both the Situation and Deſign of the Building read me a Leſſon: the one of awful Admonition, the other of comfortable Inſtruction.—*Comfortable Inſtruction.* How maſſy and ponderous is the Edifice! Yet, there is not the leaſt Reaſon to be apprehenſive of a Failure in the Foundation. Was the Structure ten thouſand times larger, the ſolid Rock would ſupport it, with the utmoſt Eaſe and the utmoſt Steadineſs. Such is *CHRIST*, ſuch are his Merits, ſuch his glorious Righteouſneſs, to thoſe wiſe and bleſſed Souls, who reſt all the Weight of their Everlaſting Intereſts on Him alone. *Such*, did I ſay? Much ſurer. For *the Mountains may depart, and the Hills may be removed** ; but this divine Baſis can never ſink, can never be ſhaken.—*Awful Admonition.* For, it recalls to my Memory that alarming, yet welcome Text†, which You ſtyled the ſpiritual Light-houſe. Which has been as ſerviceable to my diſtreſſed Mind and bewildered Thoughts, as ſuch an illuminated Watch-tower to the wandering and benighted Mariner. May I often view it! Ever attend to its faithful Direction! And be led by its Influences, into the Haven, the deſired Haven of Peace and Salvation.

Let me once again ſurvey thoſe vaſt but noble Deformities; thoſe rude but majeſtic Elevations of Stone. ——*Fortifications* raiſed by an Almighty Hand, to protect Us at once from warring Elements, and invading Enemies.—*Ramparts*, which overlook and command the Ocean; which, viewed by diſtant Mariners, ſeem to touch and prop the Sky. Which have ſurrounded

* Iſai. liv. 10.

† See *Rom.* ix. 30, 31, 32. and Vol. II. *Letter* V.

rounded our Isle ever since the universal Deluge, and will be her never failing Defence even to the general Conflagration.—If some opinionated Engineer should take it into his Head, to suspect the Stability of these unshaken and everlasting Bulwarks: if He should make Proposals for strengthening them with Buttresses, or girding them round with Cramping-Irons! How would his Project be received? With Approbation and Applause? Or with Contempt and Indignation? "Fool "that He is! To think of inlarging, corroborating, "or improving the *finished* and *magnificent* Works "of Nature, by the *puny* Piddlings of Art!—— Such, so foolish and preposterous was my once favourite Conceit, of adding my own Performances, in order to increase the justifying Efficacy of *CHRIST*'s Obedience. What a Disparagement was this to the great, the divine Foundation! Which, for the Support and Security of burdened and indangered Sinners, is *sufficient*—is *self sufficient*—is *all-sufficient*.

How *changeable* is the Face of this liquid Element! Not long ago, there was nothing, from this stony Boundary, to the Horizon's utmost Verge, but the wildest Tumult and most horrible Confusion. Now, the stormy Flood has smoothed its rugged Brow, and the watery Uproar is lulled into a profound Tranquillity. Where *roling Mountains* rushed and raged, threatning to dash the Clouds, and deluge the Earth; there the *gentlest Undulations* play, and only just wrinkle the Surface of the mighty Bason. Where the dreadful Abyss opened its wide and unfathomable Jaws, to swallow up the trembling Sailor, and his shattered Vessel; there a calm and clear Expanse diffuses its ample Bosom, alluring the Fish to bask in the Sun, and inviting the Sea-fowl to watch for their Prey.

In this fair floating Mirror, I see the Picture of every Cloud, which passes through the Regions of the Sky. But in its uncertain and treacherous Temperature, I see more plainly the inconstant and ever-variable Condition of human Affairs.—I durst not be

Surety

Surety to the Mariner, for peaceful Seas and ſoothing Gales. I could not aſcertain the Continuance of this halcyon Weather, ſo much as a ſingle Day, or even to the next Hour. And let me not fondly promiſe myſelf an *uninterrupted* Tenor of Serenity in my Mind, or of Proſperity in my Circumſtances.—Sometimes, indeed, my Heart exults under the Smile of Heaven, and the Favour of GOD. But ſoon; ah! too ſoon I am clouded with Fear, and oppreſſed with Corruption. I ſigh out that paſſionate Acknowledgment, *Wretched Man that I am!* And add that wiſhful Inquiry, *Who ſhall deliver me?*—For this diſordered State of Things, the afflicted Patriarch's Complaint, is the moſt appoſite Motto, and the moſt wholeſome Memento; *Changes and War are around me**. ——But there is a World, where diſaſtrous Revolutions will be known no more. Where our Enjoyments will no longer *fluctuate* like the Ocean, but be more ſtedfaſt than the Rocks, and more immoveable than the Shores.

Here, I ſee an immenſe Collection of Waters, in a State of deep Repoſe. Could I extend my View to ſome remoter Tracts, I ſhould behold every Thing ſmoother and calmer ſtill. Not a Furrow ſinks, nor a Ridge ſwells, the Surface of the Ocean. 'Tis all like a glaſſy Plain. The Waves are aſleep. Echo is huſhed. Not a Gale ſtirs. The Sea ſtagnates; the Mariner is *becalmed*; and the Veſſel ſcarcely creeps. —Whereas, could I ſurvey the Straits of *Magellan*, or the Gut of *Gibraltar*, I ſhould find a very ſtriking Difference. There, They Waters preſs in with Vehemence, and ruſh forwards with Impetuoſity. All is there in ſtrong Agitation, and rapid Progreſs. The Ship is *whirled* through the narrow Paſſage; and rides, as it were, on the Wheels of the Surge, or on the Wings of the Wind.—This, my dear *Aſpaſio*, is a true Image of what I have been, and of what I am. Some Months ago, when I was inſenſible of Guilt, all my Prayers were liſtleſs, and all my Religion was a ſpi-

* Job x. 17.

a ſpiritual Lethargy. I felt not in my Heart, what I uttered with my Tongue. *Hoſannahs* were but an empty Ceremony, and Confeſſions froze on my formal Lips.——But, ſince the SPIRT of GOD has awakened me from my Dream, and convinced me of my Sinfulneſs, I can no longer be ſatisfied with indolent and yawning Devotions. Tryals and Temptations put ſtrong Cries into my Mouth. My Soul mourns before the LORD: my Deſires plead with the Bleſſed GOD: and I am ready to ſay, as the Patriarch of old, "I cannot, I muſt not, *I will not let* "*Thee go, unleſs Thou bleſs me**."

I ſee no Flocks of Sheep, with ſober Aſſiduity, nibbling the graſſy Plains. No ſportive Lambs, with innocent Gaiety, friſking along the ſunny Banks. Here are no Stables for the generous Steed, nor Paſtures for the luſty Heifer. Nevertheleſs, theſe watery Regions are ſtocked with Colonies of *proper* and *peculiar* Inhabitants.—Who are cloathed and accoutred in exact Conformity to the Clime. Not in ſwelling Wool, or buoyant Feathers; not in a flowing Robe, or a full-trimmed Suit; but with as much Compactneſs, and with as little Superfluity, as poſſible. They are clad, or rather *ſheathed* in *Scales:* which adhere cloſely to their Bodies, and are always laid in a Kind of natural Oil. Than which Apparel nothing can be more *light*, and at the ſame Time nothing more *ſolid*. It hinders the Fluid from penetrating their Fleſh; it prevents the Cold from coagulating their Blood; and enables them to make their Way through the Waters, with the utmoſt Facility.——They have each a curious Inſtrument †, by which they increaſe or diminiſh their ſpecific Gravity: ſink like Lead, or float like a Cork; riſe to what Height, or deſcend to what Depth, they pleaſe.

This is the Abode of *Leviathan*, hugeſt of living Creatures. Before whom the broad-limbed Elephant, and the tall-necked Camel, are mere Shrimps. A ſtretch-

* Gen. xxxii. 26. † The Air bladder.

ſtretched-out Promontory, when He ſleeps; a moving Iſland, when He ſwims; "making the Sea to boil "like a Pot," when, unwieldily wallowing, He takes his prodigious Paſtime —Here, the voracious *Shark*, that Tyrant of the fluid Kingdoms, and Aſſaſſin of the finny Nations, roams and commits his Ravages; imbrues his horrid Fangs, and marks his rapid Path with Blood.——Here dwelt that *great*, and greatly ſurpriſing *Fiſh*, whoſe Fierceneſs and Avidity the Almighty SOVEREIGN employed as his Purſuivant, to arreſt a fugitive Prophet. Whoſe ample Jaws, or capacious Entrails, were the Dungeon to confine a rebellious Subject, and the Cabin to lodge a penitent Offender. Whoſe Bulk and Strength and Speed were a kind of Veſſel, tranſporting this Convict, to *the Bottom of the Mountains, and the Bars of the Earth* *. After the Criminal was ſufficiently chaſtiſed, and properly humbled, they ſerved as a Galley with Oars, to convey Him ſafe to Land.

In the ſame Element reſides, (at leaſt takes up Part of his Reſidence) that formidable Monſter who is made without Fear, and *has not his Like upon Earth*. He eſteemeth the pointed Iron as Straw, and ponderous Braſs as rotten Wood. His Heart is as hard as a Piece of the nether Millſtone, and his Scales are a Coat of impenetrable Mail. Strength not to be reſiſted, much leſs to be ſubdued, lies intrenched in his ſinewy Neck. His Eyes are like the Eyelids of the opening Day; and when he rolls thoſe glaring Orbs, there ſeems to be another Morn riſen on Midnoon. His Teeth are terrible, jagged for Rapine, and edged with Death. His Throat is as a burning Furnace; Clouds of Smoke are poured from his Noſtrils, and Flakes of Fire iſſue from his Mouth. None, no not the moſt reſolute, dares provoke Him to the Combat, or even ſtir Him up from his Slumbers. He laugheth at the ſhaking of the Spear, and

* Jonah ii. 6.

*Sorrow marcheth in Triumph before Him**. Whenever He raiſeth Himſelf, the Mighty are afraid; where-ever He advanceth, Ruin is there.——If a mere Creature is capable of ſpreading ſuch Alarm and Dread; how *greatly* is the CREATOR himſelf to be feared! Who can turn the moſt harmleſs Inhabitant of the Ocean, into a ravenous Alligator, or a horrid Crocodile! Who can arm every Reptile of the Ground, with all the Force and Rage of a Lion!

'Tis impoſſible to enter on the Muſter-roll, thoſe ſcaly Herds, and that minuter Fry, which graze the Sea-weed, or ſtray through the coral Groves. They are innumerable, as the Sands which lie under them; countleſs, as the Waves which cover them.——Here are uncouth Animals, of *monſtrous* Shapes†, and *amaz-*

ing

* *Job* xli. 22. לפניו תדוין דאבה *Mæror*, ſays *Bochart*, *præcedit tanquam Metutor & Comes, tum dique Anteambulo Regis.* Terror and Anguiſh are a kind of *advanced Guard* to this Monarch among the Reptiles. Or, they go before the Monſter, as the Man bearing a Shield went before the *Philiſtine* Giant.——The original Word occurs in no other Part of the divine Book. I cannot recollect any Expreſſion, which ſo fully repreſents its Meaning, as *Homer*'s κυδιοων, or *Xenophon*'s γαυριασθαι; both which are intended to deſcribe the Ardour and Action of a high-mettled prancing Steed.——The whole Paragraph is a Sketch of the *Crocodile*'s Picture. It exhibits a few Circumſtances, culled from that inimitable Deſcription, extant in the Book of *Job*. Which are given, either in the ſacred Writer's *own* Words, or elſe in a *paraphraſtic* Explanation of their Senſe.

† *Monſtrous Shapes*——Such as the *Sword-fiſh*; whoſe upper Jaw is lengthened into a ſtrong and ſharp Sword. With which He ſometimes ventures to attack the Ships, though armed with Thunder; and is capable of piercing their Sides, though ribbed with Oak. This may be called the *Champion* of the Waters. Who, though never exceeding ſixteen Feet in Length, yet, confiding in a Weapon at once ſo truſty and ſo tremendous, ſcruples not to give Battle even to the Whale Himſelf.—The *Sun-fiſh* has no Tail; ſeems to be all Head; and was it not for two Fins, which act the Part of Oars, would be one intire round Maſs of Fleſh.—The *Polypus*, remarkable for its numerous Feet, and as many Claws; by which it has the Appearance of a mere Inſect, and ſeems fitted only to crawl. At the ſame Time, an Exceſ-

cence,

ing Qualities *. Some, that have been discovered by the inquisitive Eye of Man; and many more, that remain among the Secrets of the hoary Deep.——Here are Sholes and Sholes, of various Characters, and of the most diversified Sizes; from the *cumbrous* Whale, whose Flouncings tempest the Ocean, to the *evanescent* Anchovy, whose Substance dissolves in the smallest Fricassee.——Some, lodged in their pearly Shells, and fattening on their rocky Beds, seem attentive to no higher Employ, than that of imbibing moist Nutriment. These, but a small Remove from vegetable Life, are almost rooted to the Rocks, on which they lie reposed. While others, active as

cence, arising on the Back, enables it to steer and pursue a steady Course in the Waves. So that it may pass under the two-fold Character of a *Sailor* and a *Reptile*.——*Horace* intimates, that the *British* Ocean is famous for producing Sea-monsters;

Te belluosus qui remotis
Obstrepit Oceanus Britannis.

* *Amazing Qualities*——Among these may be reckoned the *Torpedo*, which benumbs on a sudden, and renders impotent, whatever Fish it assaults. And, which is a more extraordinary Property, strikes even the Fisherman's Arm, when He offers to lay hold on it, with a temporary Deadness. By this means, it possesses the double Advantage, of arresting its Prey, and securing itself——The *Cuttle-fish*, furnished with a liquid Magazine, of a Colour and Consistence like Ink. Which, when pursued by an Enemy, the Creature emits, and blackens the Water. By this Artifice, the Foe is bewildered in the Chace; and while the one vainly gropes in the Dark, the Other seizes the Opportunity, and makes his Escape——The *Nautilus*, whose Shell forms a natural Boat. The dextrous Inhabitant unfurls a Membrane to the Wind, which serves him instead of a Sail. He extends also a Couple of Arms, with which, as with two slender Oars, He rows himself along. When He is disposed to dive, He strikes Sail; and, without any Apprehension of being drowned, sinks to the Bottom. When the Weather is calm, and He has an Inclination to see the World, or take his Pleasure, He mounts to the Surface; and, self-taught in the Art of Navigation, performs his Voyage without either Chart or Compass: is Himself the *Vessel*, the *Rigging*, and the *Pilot*.——For a more copious Illustration of this amusing and wonderful Subject, see *Nat. Displ.* Vol. III.

the winged Creation, and swift as an Arrow from the *Indian* Bow, shoot along the yielding Flood, and range at large the spacious Regions of the Deep.

Here is the *Tortoise*, who never moves out under her own portable Penthouse. The *Lobster*, which, whether He sleeps or wakes, is still in a State of Defence, and clad in jointed Armour. The *Oyster*, a sort of living Jelly, ingarrisoned in a Bulwark of native Stone. With many other Kinds of Sea Reptiles, or, as the Psalmist speaks, *Things creeping innumerable* *.——I am surprised at the Variety of their Figure, and charmed with the Splendor of their Colours. Unsearchable is the Wisdom, and endless the Contrivance, of the All creating GOD!—Some are rugged in their Form, and little better than hideous in their Aspect. Their Shells seem to be the rude Production of a disorderly Jumble, rather than the regular Effects of Skill and Design. Yet We shall find, even in these *seeming* Irregularities, the *nicest* Dispositions. These Abodes, uncouth as they may appear, are adapted to the Genius of their respective Tenants, and exactly suited to their particular Exigencies. Neither the *Ionic* Delicacy, nor the *Corinthian* Richness, nor any other Order of Architecture, would have served their Purposes half so well, as this coarse and homely Fabric.

Some, on the other hand, are extremely neat. Their Structure is all Symmetry and Elegance. No Enamel in the World is comparable to their Polish. There's not a *Room* of *State*, in all the Palaces of *Europe*, so briliantly adorned, as the Dining-room and the Bed-chamber of the little Fish, that dwells in *Mother of Pearl*. Such a lovely Mixture of Red, and Blue, and Green, so delightfully staining the most clear and glistering Ground, is no where else to be seen. The royal Power may covet it, and human Art may mimic it; but neither the one, nor the other, nor both united, will ever be able to equal it.

But

* Psalm. civ. 25.

But what I admire more, than all their Streaks, their Spots, and their Embroidery, is, The extraordinary Proviſion made for their *Safety*.——Nothing is more reliſhing and palatable than their Fleſh. Nothing more heavy and ſluggiſh than their Motions. As they have no Speed to eſcape, neither have they any Dexterity to elude the Foe. Were they naked or unguarded, they muſt be an eaſy Prey to every Freebooter, that roams the Ocean.—To prevent this fatal Conſequence, what is only Clothing to other Animals, is to them a *Clothing*, a *Houſe*, and a *Caſtle*. They have a Fortification, that grows with their Growth, and is a Part of themſelves. By this means, they live ſecure amidſt Millions and Millions of ravenous Jaws: by this means, they are *imparked*, as it were, in their own Shell; and, ſcreened from every other Aſſault, are reſerved for the Uſe and Pleaſure of Mankind.

This is the Birth-place of *Cod*, the ſtanding Repaſt of Lent. This is the Nurſery of *Turbot*, for its exquiſite Reliſh juſtly ſtyled, The Pheaſant of the Waters. Hence comes the *Sturgeon*, delicious even in Pickle, and a Regale for royal Luxury: Hence the *Flounders*, dappled with reddiſh Spots, and a Supply for vulgar Wants.—Here dwell the *Mackarel*, decked, when haled from their native Element, richly decked with the moſt gloſſy Dies; the *Herring*, whole Back is mottled with Azure, and his Belly ſleek with Silver: the *Salmon*, in plainer Habit, but of larger Subſtance, and higher Eſteem, than either or both the preceding. —Theſe, when ſhotten and lean, wander wildly up and down the vaſt Abyſs, When *plump* and *delicate*, they throng our Creeks, and ſwarm in our Bays: they repair to the Shallows, or haunt the running Streams. —Who bids theſe Creatures evacuate the Shores, and diſperſe themſelves into all Quarters, when they become worthleſs and unfit for our Service? Who rallies and recals the undiſciplined Vagrants, as ſoon as they are improved into deſirable Food? Who appoints the very Scene of our Ambuſhes, to be the Place of their

Rendezvous? So that they come like Volunteers to our Nets?——Surely, the Furlow is ſigned, the Summons iſſued, and the Point of Reunion ſettled, by a Providence ever indulgent to Mankind; ever ſtudious to treat Us with Dainties, and *load Us with Benefits* *.

We have wondered at † our *SAVIOUR*'s Penetration and Power—his *Penetration*, which, though the Sea was at a Diſtance, and Walls intervened, diſcerned the Fiſh, that had juſt ſwallowed a Piece of Money—his *Power*, which, without any Delay, brought the lawleſs Rambler, charged with the ſilver Spoil, to *Peter*'s Hook. But is it not equally wonderful, to obſerve ſuch innumerable Multitudes of finny Viſitants, annually approaching our Shores, and crouding our Banks? Which furniſh our Tables with a wholeſome and delicate *Repaſt*; at the ſame Time, that they yield to our Nation a *Revenue* ‡, more certain, and no leſs conſiderable, than the Mines of *Peru*.

Theſe approach, while thoſe of *enormous* Size and *tremendous* Appearance abandon the Shores. The latter might indanger the Fiſherman's Safety, and would certainly ſcare away the valuable Fiſh from our Coaſts. They are therefore reſtrained by an inviſible Hand, and abſcond in the Abyſſes of the Ocean. Juſt as the wild Beaſts of the Earth, impelled by the ſame overruling Power, hide themſelves in the Receſſes of the Foreſt.——A Ship, infected with a peſtilential Diſtemper, is obliged to keep off at Sea; and not permitted to enter the Port, till ſhe has performed her *Quarantine*. In like manner, theſe Monſters of the Deep, whoſe very Buſineſs is Deſtruction, are laid under a *providential*

* Pſal. lxviii. 19.

† See *Letter* VIII. *p.* 219.

‡ We are told by the afore-mentioned Author, That the Banks of *Newfoundland* alone, bring into the Proprietors of that Fiſhery, a Revenue of ſeveral Millions every Year.—— And they will, in all Probability, be an unimpaired Reſource of Treaſure, when the richeſt Mines now wrought in the World, are choked up or exhauſted.

providential Interdict. Only with this very desirable Difference, that, as their Presence would always be pernicious, they are never suffered to come near; their Quarantine is *perpetual*.

Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach Thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they shall tell Thee: or speak to the Earth, and it shall teach Thee *; *and the Fishes of the Sea shall declare unto Thee*—That the LORD is *gracious*——That his tender Mercies are over *all* his Works—That to *Us* He is superabundantly and profusely good. Having ordered all Things in the Surges of the Ocean, as well as on the Surface of the Ground, for our rich Accommodation, and for our greatest Advantage.

One Circumstance, relating to the Natives of the Deep, is very peculiar, and no less astonishing. As they neither sow, nor reap; have neither the Produce of the Hedges, nor the Gleanings of the Field; they are obliged to *plunder* and *devour* one another, for necessary Subsistence. They are a kind of authorized Banditti, that make Violence and Murder † their professed Trade.——By this means, prodigious Devastations ensue; and, without proper, without very *extraordinary Recruits*, the whole Race must continually dwindle, and at length be totally extinct—Were they to bring forth, like the most prolific of our terrestrial Animals, a Dozen only, or a Score at each Birth; the Increase would be unspeakably too small for the Consumption. The weaker Species would be destroyed by the stronger; and, in Time, the stronger must perish, even by their successful Endeavours to maintain themselves.

* *Job* xii. 7, 8. The *Earth* is represented, as bearing witness to the immense Benignity of the blessed GOD. Some *Minutes*, or a short *Abstract*, of her Testimony on this Occasion, may be seen in *Letter* VI.

† To this, I believe, the Prophet alludes, in that remarkable Expression; *Thou makest Men as the Fishes of the Sea*. Thou sufferest Men to commit, without Restraint or Controul, all Manner of Outrages. What should be a civil Community, is a Scene of Oppression. The Weakest are a Prey to the Strongest, and every One seeks the Destruction of his Neighbour. *Hawes*, I. 14.

ſelves.——Therefore, to ſupply Millions of Aſſaſſins with their Prey, and Millions of Tables with their Food, yet not to depopulate the watery Realms; the Iſſue produced by every Breeder is almoſt incredible. They ſpawn, not by Scores or Hundreds, but by Thouſands and by Millions *. A *ſingle Mother* is pregnant with a *Nation*. By which amazing, but moſt needful Expedient, a periodical Reparation is made, proportionable to the immenſe Havock.

As the Sea is peopled with animated Inhabitants, it is alſo variegated with *vegetable* Productions. Some, ſoft as Wool; others, hard as Stone. Some riſe, like a leafleſs Shrub; ſome are expanded, in the Form of a Net; ſome grow with their Heads downward, and ſeem rather hanging on, than ſpringing from, the Juttings of the Rocks. Theſe may, with much greater Propriety, than the famous Plantations of *Semiramis*, be called *penſile* Gardens.——But, as my Walk reached no farther than the Purlieus of the Ocean; as neither You nor I have ever taken a ſingle Turn among thoſe ſubmarine Groves; as *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, and *Jonah*, the only Writers that ever made the wonderful Tour, intent upon *more important* Themes, have left Us no Memoirs relating to this curious Point; I ſhall not venture to advance any thing particular on the Subject. Only one Remark I would offer in general.—

The Herbs, and Trees, which flouriſh on the dry Land, are maintained by the Juices, that permeate the Soil, and fluctuate in the Air. For this Purpoſe, they

* Mr. *Petit* found 342,144 Eggs in the hard Roe of a Carp, ſixteen Inches long. Mr. *Leewenhoeck* counted, in a Cod of an ordinary Size, 9,384,000 Eggs.——A Fecundity perfectly amazing! But admirably adapted to the preſſing Exigencies of the watery World; admirably contrived for the Benefit and Delight of Mankind!——If We advert to this Peculiarity, it will give the utmoſt Emphaſis to the Patriarch's *metaphorical* Expreſſion, and an inimitable Beauty to his *prophetic* Wiſh, ידגו לרב *Let theſe* my Grandſons *grow into a Multitude*; or, which is more exactly anſwerable to the Original, *let them multiply abundantly, even like the Fiſhes of the Ocean*, Gen. xlviii. 16.

they are furnished with *Leaves*, to collect the one; and with *Roots* to attract the other. Whereas, the Sea-plants, finding sufficient Nourishment in the circumambient Waters, have no Occasion to detach a Party of Roots into the Ground, and forage the Earth for Sustenance. Instead therefore of *penetrating*, they are but just *tacked* to the Bottom; and adhere to some solid Substance, only with such a Degree of Tenacity, as may secure them from being tossed to and fro, by the random Agitation of the Waves.

We see from this, and numberless other Instances, what a *Diversity* there is, in the Operations of the great CREATOR's Hand. Yet every Alteration is an Improvement, and each new Pattern has a *peculiar Fitness* of its own.—The same Oeconomy takes place, such a Difference of Administration, I mean, in his Government of the rational World. In "choosing an "Heritage for his People," and assigning a Condition to each of his Servants, there is a great Variety with respect to Individuals; yet a perfect Uniformity, and complete Harmony, with respect to the Whole.—Some He calls out to a Course of distinguished Labours. They make an illustrious Figure in Life, and appear *as a City set on an* * *Hill!* Others He consigns over to Obscurity. They are like the Prophets, whom good *Obadiah* hid in a Cave, and are styled *his secret Ones* †. *Those*, the Cedars, which stand conspicuous on the Top of *Lebanon: these*, the Violets, which lie concealed at the Foot of a Briar.

St. *Paul* was eminently qualified for busy Scenes, and the most extensive Services. He is introduced, therefore, into Places of Concourse. His Ministry lies amidst the most renowned and populous Cities. Even his *Imprisonment* at *Rome*, seems to have been a providential Expedient for fixing Him, as it were, on the *Stage* of public Observation, and in the very *Center* of universal Intelligence. Where his Preaching was like plunging a Stone into the Midst of a smooth Canal; which affects not only the neighbouring Parts of the Surface, but spreads the floating Cir-

* Matt. v. 14. † Psal. lxxxiii. 3.

cles over all the wide Expanſe.—Whereas, the beloved *John*, being leſs fitted to buſtle among a Crowd, is ſent into the unfrequented *ſolitary* Iſland; there to indulge the Flights of heavenly Contemplation; and receive, with uninterrupted Attention, the myſterious Viſions of GOD.—*Job* ſhall have Thorns in his Path; have the Dunghill for his Seat; and be expoſed, as a Mark, to all the Arrows of Tribulation. *Solomon* ſhall dip his Foot in Oil; ſhall be elevated on the Throne of Royalty; and ſurrounded with the moſt laviſh Careſſes of Heaven.

In all this ſeeming, this more than ſeeming Contrariety, there is a Diſplay, not only of ſovereign Authority, but of conſummate Propriety.—The great HEAD of the Church, acts like a judicious *General*; and appoints ſuch a Station to each of his Soldiers, as correſponds with the Ability He gives. He acts like the moſt ſkilful *Phyſician*; and preſcribes ſuch a Remedy for all his Patients, as is moſt nicely ſuited to their reſpective Caſes. He knows the preciſe Point of Time, the particular Place of Abode, the peculiar Circumſtances of Condition, which are moſt proper for each and every of his Children; and, like a tender as well as unerring *Father*; what He knows to be beſt, that He conſtantly allots.—I ſaid, like a General, like a Phyſician, like a Father. But the Compariſon is low; the Language is inexpreſſive; *CHRIST* is all that is implied in theſe Relations, and unſpeakably *more*.—O! that We may rejoice in the Superintendency of ſuch a SAVIOUR; and not only reſign Ourſelves to his Will, but *thank* Him for managing the Helm; *thank* Him for ſteering our Courſe, through the Changes of Time, and the Uncertainties of Futurity. Since, whatever our froward and petulant Paſſions may ſuggeſt, the LORD's Ways are ſo far from being unequal, that they have all poſſible Fitneſs and Propriety; they are ordered in Number, Weight, and "Meaſure."

All is ſo very different from the Proſpects, which lately preſented themſelves, that I can hardly forbear aſking, Whether I am not tranſlated into a *new World*?—Where-

—Where are the waving Hillocks, covered with the CREATOR's Bounty? Where are the fruitful Vallies, made vocal with his Praiſe? No cultured Field, no opening Bloſſom, not ſo much as a green Leaf appears. None of my late Entertainments remain, but only the cooling Zephyrs. Which are no longer perfumed with the *Breath* of Flowers, but impregnated with the *Freſhneſs* of the Ocean.—Yet, though all thoſe lovely Landſcapes are withdrawn; though the gurgling Fountain is ſilenced, and the blooming Garden loſt; I am not far from the Origin, both of the Odours, which exhale from the one, and of the Cryſtal, which flows from the other. I am now upon the Margin of that *grand Reſervoir*, which ſupplies the Country with its Fertility, and the Parterre with its Beauty.—The Sea is the inexhauſtible Ciſtern of the Univerſe. The Air and Sun conſtitute the mighty *Engine*, which works without Intermiſſion, to raiſe the liquid Treaſure. While the Clouds ſerve as ſo many *Aqueducts*, to convey the genial Stores along the Atmoſphere; and diſtribute them at ſeaſonable Periods, and in regular Proportions, through all the Regions of the Globe.

I queſtion, whether the united Application of Mankind could, with their utmoſt Skill, and with all poſſible Percolations, fetch a ſingle Drop of *perfectly* ſweet Water*, from this unmeaſurable Pit of Brine. Yet the Action of the ſolar Heat draws off, every Hour, every Minute, Millions and Millions of Tons, in va- porous

* I have not forgotten, what was lately affirmed in our public Papers; That a certain ingenious Gentleman, I think in the City of *Durham*, had found out the Art of *ſweetening* Sea-water. —What he produced, might probably approve itſelf to the Taſte, and not be without its Uſefulneſs. Yet I cannot but query, whether it will be found to have all thoſe fine, balmy, ſalutiferous Qualities, which diſtinguiſh and recommend the *Rain-Water*, Which has been exhaled by the kindly Warmth of the Sun; has been filtrated by paſſing and repaſſing through the Regions of the Air; has been clarified in the higheſt and pureſt Tracts of the Atmoſphere; has been further refined and perfected by the ſearching Agency of the Winds.—I ſhould very much wonder, if the *puny* Alembic could equal this *grand* Apparatus of Nature.

porous Exhalations. Which, being ſkilfully parceled out, and ſecurely lodged in *the Bottles of Heaven* *, are ſent abroad, ſweetened and refined, without any brackiſh Tincture or the leaſt bituminous Sediment.—Sent abroad upon the Wings of the Wind, to *diſtil* in Dews, or *pour* themſelves in Rain; to *ooze* from the Orifices of Fountains †; to *trickle* along the Veins of Rivulets; to *riſe* in the Cavities of Wells; to *roll*, in many a headlong Torrent, from the Sides of Mountains; to *flow*, in copious Streams, amidſt the Boſom of burning Deſarts, and through the Heart of populous Kingdoms. In order to refreſh and fertilize, to beautify and enrich, every Soil, in every Clime.

How amiable is the Goodneſs, and how amazing is the Power, of the World's Adorable MAKER!—How *amiable his Goodneſs!* in diſtributing ſo largely, what is ſo abſolutely neceſſary, and ſo extenſively beneficial. That Water, without which We can ſcarce perform any Buſineſs, or enjoy any Comfort, ſhould be every One's Property. Should ſpring up from the Soil; ſhould drop down from the Clouds; ſhould ſtream by our Houſes; ſhould take a Journey, from the Ends of the Earth, and the Extremities of the Ocean, on purpoſe to ſerve Us.—How *amazing his Power!* That this boundleſs Maſs of fluid Salt, ſo intolerably nauſeous to the human Taſte, ſhould be the original Spring, which deals out every palatable Draught to Mankind, and quenches the Thirſt of every Animal! Doubtleſs, the Power by which *this* is effected, can extract Comfort from our Afflictions, Advantage

* So the Clouds are *elegantly* ſtyled in ſacred Writ, *Job* xxxviii. 37.

† We are obliged to *Clemens Romanus*, for the moſt juſt and elegant Repreſentation of Fountains and their Uſefulneſs, that perhaps any where exiſts. Αἱ νηγαι τῶν πηγῶν ἀπολαυσιν ἡμῖν ὑγιειαν δημιουργηθεισαι, διχα ἐλλειψεως παρεχονται τας ἀπ' ἀυτῶν ζωην ἀνθρωποις μαζας, 1 Epiſt. ad *Corinth.* He calls *Fountains*, the *Breaſts* or *Teats* of the Earth. The Compariſon, I believe, is his own: and nothing can exceed it, as to Propriety and Beauty.

Advantage from our Calamities, and *make all Things work together for our Good**.

Vaſt and various are the Advantages †, which We receive from the liquid Element: *vaſt*, as its unbounded Extent; *various*, as its ever-mutable Surface.—The ſweet Waters glide along the Earth, in ſpacious Currents: which not only exhilarate the adjacent Country, by their humid Train, and *exhaling* Moiſture; but, by giving a briſk Impulſe to the Air, prevent the unwholeſome Stagnation of their own Vapours.—They paſs by opulent Cities, and receiving all their Filth, rid them of a thouſand Nuiſances. Which, when once committed to theſe *fluid Scavengers* are as effectually ſecreted, as if they were buried ever ſo deep in the Earth.—Yet, though they condeſcend to ſo mean an Employ, they are fitted for more honourable Services. They enter the Gardens of a Prince, and compoſe ſome of the moſt delightful Ornaments of the Place. They glitter upon the Eye, as they float in the ample *Canal*. They amuſe the Imagination, as they aſcend in curious *Jet d'Eaus*. They yield a nobler Entertainment, as, forming themſelves into Sheets of ſloping Silver, they fall in graceful or in grand *Caſcades*.—If, inſtead of Beautifiers, We think proper to make uſe of them as *Drudges*, they ply at our Mills; they toil inceſſantly at the Wheel; and, by working the hugeſt Engines, take upon themſelves an unknown Share of our Fatigue, and ſave Us a proportionable Degree of Expence.

So forcibly they act, when collected; and moſt ſurpriſingly they inſinuate, when *detached*. They throw themſelves into the Body of a Plant; they penetrate the minuteſt of its organized Tubes; and find a Paſſage through Meanders, *too ſmall* for the Eye to diſcern, *too numerous* and intricate even for Imagination to follow.—How difficultly does a Labourer

* Rom. viii. 28.

† The high *Value* which Mankind ſet upon this Element, and the many *Benefits* they receive from its Miniſtration, both theſe Particulars are very ſtrongly expreſſed by the *Hebrews*. Who call a Pool or Reſervoir of Water ברכה; which denotes, in its primary Signification, *a Bleſſing*, Cant. vii. 4. Iſai. vii. 3.

bourer that ſerves the Maſon, puſh his Way up the Rounds of a Ladder, bending under the Burden of Mortar on his Head! While theſe Servants in the Employ of Nature, carry their Load to a much greater Height; and climb with the utmoſt Eaſe, even without the Aſſiſtance of Steps or of Stairs. They convey the nutrimental Stores of Vegetation, from the *loweſt Fibres* that are plunged into the Soil, to the very *topmoſt Twigs* that wave amidſt the Clouds. They are the Caterers for the vegetable World: or (if I may be allowed the Expreſſion) the *Sutlers*, which attend the whole *Hoſt* of Plants; to furniſh them with ſeaſonable Refreſhment, and neceſſary Proviſion. By means of which, *the Trees of the LORD are full of Sap, even the Cedars of Lebanon which HE hath planted**. And, notwithſtanding their vaſt Elevation, and prodigious Diffuſion; though they are abandoned by Man, and deprived of all Cultivation; yet, not a ſingle Branch is deſtitute of Leaves, nor a ſingle Leaf of Moiſture.

Beſides the ſalutary, cleanly, and ſerviceable Circulation of the Rivers; the Sea has a Libration, no leſs advantageous, and much more remarkable.——Every Day, this immenſe Collection of Waters, for the Space of five or ſix Hours, *flows* towards the Land; and, after a ſhort Pauſe, *retires* again to its inmoſt Caverns; taking up nearly the ſame Time in its Retreat, as it required for its Acceſs.—How *great* is the Power, which ſets the whole fluid World in Motion! Which protrudes to the Shores ſuch an inconceivable Weight of Waters, without any Concurrence from the Winds, frequently in direct Oppoſition to all their Force! How *gracious* alſo is the Providence, which bids the mighty Element perform its tumbling Revolutions, with the moſt exact Punctuality! Was it ſuffered to advance, with a lawleſs and unlimited Swell; it might ſweep over Kingdoms, and deluge whole Continents. Was it irregular and uncertain in its Approaches, Navigation would be at a Stand, and Trade become precarious. —But, being conſtant at its *ſtated Periods*, and never exceeding,

* Pſal. civ. 16.

exceeding its *appointed Bounds*, it creates no Alarm to the Country, and affords very conſiderable Aids to Traffic.

The Tide, at its *Flow*, ruſhing up our large Rivers, clears and deepens the Paſſage; in many Places ſpreads a copious Flood, where a dry and empty Waſte lay before——Is the Sailor returned from his Voyage, and waiting at the Mouth of the Channel? The *Flux* is ready to convey his Veſſel to the very Doors of the Owner; and without any Hazard of ſtriking on the Rocks, or being faſtened in the Sands.——Has the Merchant freighted his Ship? Would He have it transferred to the Ocean? The *Reflux* tenders its Service; and bears away the Load, with the utmoſt Expedition, and with equal Safety.——Behold, O Man! How greatly thou art beloved, how *highly favoured* by thy MAKER! In what Part of his Works has He forgotten or overlooked thy Welfare? Shew me a Creature, point out a Spot; in the Formation or Diſpoſition of which, He has not been mindful of thy Intereſts? *He has made Thee to have Dominion over the Works of his Hands, and has put all Things in Subjection under thy Feet. All Sheep and Oxen; the Fowls of the Air, and the Fiſhes*; yea, and the Surges *of the Sea**, are ſubſervient to thy Benefit. Even theſe, wild and impetuous as they are, yield their willing Backs, to receive thy Load; and like an indefatigable Beaſt of Burden, carry it to the Place, which thou ſhalt nominate.

What preſerves this vaſt Flood in a State of perpetual *Purity?* It is the univerſal Sewers, into which are diſcharged the Refuſe and Filth of the whole World. That which would defile the Land, and pollute the Air, is tranſmitted to the Ocean, and neither Miſchief nor Inconvenience enſue. Thoſe Swarms of *Locuſts*——which, while living were a Plague to *Pharaoh*, by their lothed Intruſion; and when dead, might have cauſed a more dreadful Plague, by their noiſome Stench——ſwept into the Sea, were neither peſtilential,

* Pſal. viii. 6, 7, 8.

tial, nor offenſive. How then is this Receptacle of every Nuiſance kept clean? Why does it not contract a noxious Taint, and diffuſe a deſtructive Contagion? Such as would render it a *Grave* to the aquatic, and *Bane* to the terreſtrial Animals?—'Tis owing, partly to its inceſſant Motion, partly to its ſaline Quality. By the One, it is ſecured from any *internal* Principle of Corruption; by the other, it works itſelf clear from every *adventitious* Defilement.

A Directory this, and a Pattern for me!——Thus may divine *Grace*, like the penetrating Power of Salt, cure the Depravity of my Heart, and rectify the Diſorders of my Temper! Seaſon my Words, and make all my Converſation ſavoury!—Thus may a continual Courſe of *Activity*, in my ſecular and my ſacred Vocation, prevent the pernicious Effects of Indolence! Let me daily exerciſe, or be attempting to exerciſe, the Graces of Chriſtianity. Leſt Faith become feeble; leſt Hope contract Dimneſs; and Charity wax cold.

Now the Tide begins to flow. Wave riſes upon Wave, and Billow rolls over Billow. Nothing can divert, nothing retard its Progreſs; no, not for a Moment. Though *Canutus* be in the Way*; though his

* Alluding to a memorable and inſtructive Story, recorded of King *Canutus*. Who, probably without having read, had nevertheleſs thoroughly learned, that excellent Leſſon of *Horace*;

Regum timendorum in proprios Greges,
Reges in ipſos Imperium eſt Jovis.

Some of his abject and deſigning Flatterers, had the *impious Aſſurance* to tell Him, "His Power was more than human."—To convince them of their Folly, and rebuke them for their Falſhood, He ordered his Chair of State to be placed on the Extremity of the Shore, juſt as the Tide began to flow. Here He took his Seat, in the Preſence of the *Paraſites*, and many other Attendants. Then, with all that Dignity of Air, and Severity of Accent, which ſovereign Authority knows how to aſſume, He ſaid ---"Thou Sea, the Land on which I ſit is mine; nor has any "One dared to invade my Rights, or diſobey my Commands, "without ſuffering the deſerved Puniſhment. I charge Thee, "therefore, on Pain of my higheſt Diſpleaſure, not to enter "theſe Territories, nor touch the Feet of *England*'s Monarch."

When

his royal Authority, and ſtrict Prohibition, nay, though all the Forces of his Kingdom oppoſe; it will never diſcontinue the advancing Swell, till it has reached the deſtined Point.—So, may I *always abound* in Communion with GOD, or in Beneficence to Men; reſigning one religious or charitable Employ, only to enter upon another; and be *thus* preſſing forward, *ſtill* preſſing forward, to the Prize of my high Calling in *CHRIST JESUS*.—Differing from thoſe regular Viciſſitudes of the Ocean, only in one Particular; That *my* Endeavours never ebb, *my* Soul never draws back. Since this would be, if *temporary*, to my grievous Loſs; if *final*, to my aggravated Perdition.

Conſider the Sea in another Capacity, and it *connects* the remoteſt Realms of the Univerſe; by facilitating an Intercourſe between their reſpective Inhabitants.—What ſhort-ſighted Beings are Mankind! How extremely ſuperficial their Views! How unavoidable therefore their frequent Miſtakes! The Antients looked upon this bottomleſs Deep, as an *unpaſſable* * Gulf. If our Forefathers were ſo egregiouſly miſtaken in this Inſtance; let not Us too peremptorily pronounce upon any difficult or myſterious Point. Leſt ſucceeding Generations, or a more inlightened State, ſhould cover Us with the double Confuſion of *childiſh* Ignorance, and *fooliſh* Conceit.

We have clearly demonſtrated, and happily experienced, the very Reverſe of that grey headed Surmiſe to be true. The Ocean, inſtead of being a Bar of Separation, is the great Bond of Union. For this Purpoſe, it is never *exhauſted*, though it ſupplies the whole

When the rude Waves made bold to enter on the forbidden Ground; nay, when thoſe uncourtly Things preſumed to ruſh upon the royal Seat, and even to daſh his Majeſty's Perſon; He ſtarted from his Throne, and bid every Beholder obſerve the *Impotence* of earthly Kings. Bid them remember, That HE alone is worthy of the Name, whom Winds and Waves and univerſal Nature obey.

* ——————— *Deus abſcidit*
Prudens Oceano diſſociabili
Terras. HOR.

whole Firmament with Clouds, and the whole Earth with Rains. Nor ever *overflows*, though all the Rivers in the Univerſe are perpetually augmenting its Stores, and pouring in their tributary Floods.——By means of this Element, We travel farther, than Birds of the ſtrongeſt Pinion fly; and diſcover Tracts, which the *Vultur's Eye has never ſeen* *. We make a Viſit to Nations, that lie drowned in their midnight Slumbers, when every induſtrious Perſon on *this* Part of the Globe, is beſtiring himſelf in all the Hurry of Buſineſs. We cultivate an Acquaintance with the Sunburnt *Negro*, and the ſhivering *Icelander*. We croſs the flaming Line, We penetrate the frozen Pole, and wing our Way even round the World.

This is the great Vehicle of *Commerce*.——Not to mention the floating Caſtles, which contain whole Armies; which bear the Thunder, the fiery Tempeſts, and all the dreadful Artillery of War; what a Multitude of Ships, of the largeſt Dimenſions, and moſt prodigious Burden, are continually paſſing and repaſſing this univerſal Thoroughfare! Ships, that are freighted, not with Sacks, but with Harveſts of Corn: that carry not Pipes, but Vintages of Wine; that are laden, not with Bars of Iron, Blocks of Marble, or Wedges of Gold, but with whole Quarries of maſſy Stone, and whole Mines of ponderous Metal. All which, lodged in theſe *volatile Store houſes*, and actuated by the Breath of Heaven, are wafted to the very Ends of the Earth; wafted, enormous and unwieldy as they are, more expeditiouſly than the light *Berlin* rolls along the Road; almoſt as ſpeedily, as the nimble footed *Roe* bounds over the Hills †.

Aſtoniſhing Ordination of eternal Wiſdom! Yet moſt graciouſly contrived for the Benefit of Mankind! I can

* Job xxviii. 7.

† A Ship, under a brisk and ſteady Gale, will ſail at the Rate of 216 Miles in 24 Hours: perſevering, if the Wind continues favourable, in the ſame rapid Career, for ſeveral Days together. A Courſe, which, conſidering both its *Swiftneſs* and *Duration*, cannot be equaled by the ableſt Horſe, perhaps not by the nimbleſt Creature that treads the Ground.

I can hardly satisfy my View, in beholding this rolling Chaos; I can never cease my Admiration, in contemplating its amazing Properties.——That an Element, so *unstable* and *fugitive*, should bear up such an immense Weight, as would burst the firmest Floors, or bend the strongest Beams!——That the *thin* and *yielding* Air should drive on, with so much Facility and Speed, Bodies of such excessive Bulk, as the Strength of a Legion would be unable to move.——That the Air and the Water, acting in Conjunction, should carry to the Distance of many thousand Miles, what the united Force of Men and Machines could scarcely drag a single Yard.——Puny and despicable are *our* Attempts: but great and marvelous are *thy* Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! *If thou wilt work*, says the Prophet, *who* or what *shall let it* *?

Neither the Meanness of the Instrument, nor the Greatness of the Event. A Sling and a Stone shall lay the gigantic Bravo in the Dust †. An Ox-Goad shall do more Execution than a Battery of Cannon ‡. Even *a Worm shall thresh the Mountains, and beat them small, and make the Hills as Chaff* §. GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT is his Name, and out of Weakness He maketh his Strength perfect.——O! that We, my dear *Aspasio*--that I especially——may be strong in the LORD, and in the Power of his Might! Then, as the light Air is made to act with a more forcible Impulse, than the most vigorous Engines; as the fluid Water is made to sustain more ponderous Loads, than the most substantial Works of Masonry; so We, who in Ourselves are nothing but *Impotence*, shall be enabled to triumph over the Legions of Hell, and tread down all the Temptations of the World.

How are the Mariners conducted through this *fluid Common*, than which nothing is more wide, and nothing more wild? Here is no Track to be followed; no Posts of Direction to be consulted; nor any Shepherd's Hut, where the wandering Traveller may ask his

* Isai. xliii. 13. † 1 Sam. xvii. 50. ‡ Judg. iii. 31.
§ Isai. xli. 14, 15.

his Way.—Are they guided by a Pillar of Fire in the Night, or a moveable Cloud in the Day? As the Sons of *Jacob* and *Joseph* were escorted through the eastern Deserts. No; but by a mean, contemptible, and otherwise worthless, *Fossil*.——The Apostle *James* mentions it, as a very observable Fact; that the *Ships, which are so great, and driven of fierce Winds, yet are turned about with a very small Helm, whithersoever the Governor listeth* *. Is it not equally wonderful, that they should be led through such a pathless and unmeasurable Waste, by so small an Expedient, as the Intervention of the *Loadstone* †?——Till this surprising Mineral was discovered, and its Properties were improved, Navigation lay in its Cradle. Was, at best, a mere Infant, that crept timorously along the Coasts; was obliged to keep within sight of the Shores; and, if driven out beyond the narrow Sphere of her Landmarks, could neither ascertain her Situation, nor pursue her Voyage. But this Guide——when every Beacon on the Top of the Hills, is vanished from the acutest Ken; where nothing but Skies are seen above, and Seas alone appear below——*this Guide* points out the proper Passage. This communicates an Intelligence, which shines clear in the thickest Darkness, and remains steady in the most tempestuous Agitations. This has given, not indeed Birth, but *Maturity* to Navigation; and turned her swadling Bands into *Wings*. This has emboldened her to launch into the Heart of the Ocean, and enabled her to range from Pole to Pole.

Thus does GOD, both in the Operations of Nature, and the Administrations of Providence, accomplish the most *important* Ends by the most *inconsiderable* Means.——When the formidable *Sisera* is to be

* Jam. iii. 4.

† I am aware, that other Expedients are used for shaping a proper Course on the Ocean; such as making Observations from the Sun by mathematical Instruments. But these, I believe, are only subordinate Aids to the Needle. The *grand* Regulator is the Magnet. I have heard an experienced Sailor declare; He would rather be without his *Quadrant*, than without his *Compass*.

be cut off, the Blow shall be given, not by some puissant Champion, but by the Hand of a Woman *. When *Jericho* is to be demolished, those impregnable Fortifications shall fall, not beneath the Stroke of battering Engines, but before the Sound of Rams Horns †.—When a hundred thousand *Midianites* are to be routed, the LORD of Hosts will gain this signal Victory, not by numerous Legions completely armed, but by a Handful of *Israelites*, accoutred only with Trumpets, Lamps, and Pitchers ‡.—Who would have thought, that from the Root of *Jesse*, a Root out of a dry Ground, should arise that great Tree, which *stretches her Boughs unto the Sea, and her Height unto the Heavens, and her Branches unto the Ends of the Earth?* That the despised *Galilean* and the Carpenter's Son, should be the SAVIOUR of the World, and the HEIR of all Things? Nay; that a Person humbled like the meanest of Slaves, and executed like the vilest of Malefactors; nailed to a Cross, and laid prostrate among the Dead; that HE should restore Life and Immortality to ruined Sinners; should open the Gates of Grace and Glory on lost Mankind? That a few *illiterate* Creatures, taken from the Barge, the Oar, and the Net, should confute Philosophers, and convert Kings; should overthrow the Strong-holds of Idolatry, and plant *Christianity* on its Ruins!——This is a Circumstance, which, though a Stumbling-block to some People, has considerably strengthened my Faith. It is perfectly agreeable to the ALMIGHTY's Manner. It is (if I may so speak) the distinguishing *Turn* of his Hand, and the peculiar *Style* of his Works. Whence does He raise the charmingly beauteous Flower? Whence the magnificent Myriads of the Forest-Oaks? Whence the boundless and inestimable Stores of the Harvest? From Principles which bear not the least Proportion to their Effects.—Besides; this most emphatically speaks THE GOD. It *shews the Lighting down of his glorious Arm* §; and absolutely precludes all the Preten-

* Judg. iv. 9. † Josh. vi. 5. ‡ Judg. vii. 19.
§ Isai. xxx. 30.

Pretenſions of human Arrogance, or finite Power. It appropriates the Honour to that Supreme AGENT, before whom the *Eaſy* and the *Arduous* are both alike. All Men that ſee it muſt confeſs, THIS HATH GOD DONE.

Through this Channel, are imported to our Iſland the choice Productions, and the peculiar Treaſures, of every Nation under Heaven. So that We can breakfaſt upon a Diſſolution of the *American* Kernel *; and ſee the rich nutrimental Liquor froth in our Cups, without ever tempting the foaming Brine. We can ſteep the delicately-flavoured *Chineſe* Leaf, in the Waters of our own Well; or ſpend the Afternoon in our own Parlour, and be regaled with an Infuſion of the finely-ſcented *Arabian* Berry. We can ſeaſon the friendly Bowl with the Juices of the *Orange*, or refreſh our clammy Palate with the Pulp of the *Tamarind*; without feeling that fervent Heat, which imparts ſuch a poignant Reliſh to the former; without ſuffering thoſe ſcorching Beams, which gave a fever-cooling Virtue to the latter. We can pile upon our Salvers a Pyramid of *Italian* Figs; fill the Interſtices with the Sky dried Raiſins of *Malaga*; and form a Summit for the inviting Structure, with the *Piſtacia Nut* of *Aleppo*—By this means, the Eaſtern Spices exhale their Odours on our Tables; and the Weſtern Canes transfuſe their Sweetneſs into our Viands. We clothe our Bodies with the vegetable Fleeces † of the South, and line our Apparel with warm furry Spoils from the North. We can wear the Pearl, poliſhed in the Abyſſes of the *Perſian* Gulf; and walk on the Carpets, manufactured in the Dominions of the *Great Mogul*; yet neither expoſe Ourſelves to the Rage of boiſterous Seas, nor the more dreaded Treachery of barbarous

* Called the *Cacoa*, which affords the principal Ingredient of *Chocolate*, and grows on a ſmall Tree in *America*.

† *Cotton*, which is a Sort of Wool, encompaſſing the Seed of a Tree.—Its Fruits is of an oval Form, about the Size of a Nut. As it ripens, it grows black on the Outſide; and by the Heat of the Sun, opens in ſeveral Places, diſcovering the Cotton through the Clefts, which is of an admirable Whiteneſs. See CHAMB. *Dict.*

barbarous People.—In short; by this grand and beneficial Expedient of Navigation, every Tide conveys into our Ports the Wealth of the remotest Climes, and brings the Abundance of the Universe to be unladen on our Quays. *London* becomes a Mart of Nations; and almost every private House in the Kingdom, is embellished or accommodated from the four Quarters of the Globe.

Almost every private House—Is not this more like rhetorical Flourish, than real Truth? Are not all the Advantages I have mentioned, the peculiar Portion of the Rich? Is not the Sea, like high Life and the gay World, somewhat *capricious* and *partial?* Bestowing lavishly her Favours on the Wealthy, at the same Time that She neglects the Needy?—Quite the Reverse. Like her most exalted, yet most condescending CREATOR, She is no Respecter of Persons. She deals out her Liberalities to All; to the Wealthy, such as are suitable to their Circumstances; to the Indigent, such as are best adapted to their Condition. If She ornaments the Abodes of the first, She employs the Hands of the last; furnishes *these* with useful Labour, *those* with elegant Accommodations. What a Multitude of industrious People acquire a Livelihood, by preparing the Commodities intended for Exportation! And what a Multitude of dextrous Artificers maintain their Families, by manufacturing the Wares imported from abroad!

It is reckoned a valuable Species of Beneficence, to provide proper Work for the Poor. This withdraws them from many Temptations, and preserves them from much Wickedness. It hinders them from being a Burden to themselves, and a Nuisance to the Public. They might otherwise be *idle*, and as Vermine on the Body politic: or even *mutinous*, and as Vipers in the Bowels of the Nation. Whereas, by exerting themselves in a due Subordination, and with becoming Diligence, they are the very Sinews of the Community; or like the grand Wheel in the Machine of State, whose incessant Activity distributes Plenty,

Plenty, and pours innumerable Conveniencies through the whole.—What a *Maſter* then, or rather what a *Miſtreſs*, is the Sea! How extenſive her Correſpondence, and how large her Demand for Workmen! Into what Branch of Trade does ſhe not enter? What kind of ingenious Science, or uſeful Toil, does ſhe not befriend? How many Millions of honeſt but needy Perſons are engaged in her Service? And how amply are they repaid for their Pains!—*They that go down to the Sea in Ships, and occupy their Buſineſs in great Waters, theſe Men ſee the Works of the* LORD, *and his Wonders in the Deep.* They alſo that dwell among their own People, and abide in the Villages, even they enjoy the Bounty, and ſhare the Advantages of the Ocean. For, though it is falſe Philoſophy, to ſuppoſe the Waters *themſelves* ſtrained through ſubterranean Paſſages, into the inland Countries; yet it is an undeniable Truth, that their beneficial *Effects* are transfuſed into every Town, every Hamlet, and every Cottage.

Surely, the Inhabitants of our Iſle, have Reaſon to turn the Prediction of *Moſes*, concerning the Tribe of *Joſeph*, into a devout and grateful Acknowledgment.—*Bleſſed of the* LORD *is* * *our Land. Bleſſed with the precious Things of Heaven, with the Dew, and with the Deep that coucheth beneath. With the precious Things brought forth by the Sun, and with the precious Things thruſt forth by the Moon. With the chief Things of the antient Mountains, and with the precious Things of the everlaſting Hills: and with the precious Things of the Earth, and the Fulneſs thereof* †.—May we alſo enjoy *the*

* *Is*, (ſo I would tranſlate the Original) not *be*; in the *predictive*, not precatory Form. This implies a Fulneſs of Faith, and diſtinguiſhes Prophecy from Prayer; beſt ſuits the extraordinary Illumination of *Moſes*; and does moſt Honour to the omniſcient SPIRIT.

† *Deut.* xxxiii. 13, 14, 15, 16. Here ſeems to be an exact Summary, and a poetical Deſcription of the Riches of Nature.—*The precious Things of Heaven*; or *Rain*, which deſcends from the upper; and *Dew*, which is formed in the lower, Regions of the Firmament.—*The Deep that coucheth beneath*; Seas, Rivers, Fountains,

the Good-will of HIM, who dwelt in the Bush *, and the Grace of HIM, who hung on the Tree! May the eternal GOD be our Refuge, and his everlasting Arms underneath both Us and our Interests!—Happy then wilt Thou be, thrice happy, O *England!* Thy temporal Advantages, and thy spiritual Privileges considered, it may truly be said, *Who*, or what Nation, *is like unto Thee?*

This for my Country; now let me wish for myself;

GOD of all Worlds! Source and Supreme of Things!
From whom all Life, from whom Duration springs!
Intense O! let me for thy Glory burn,
Nor fruitless view my Days and Months return.
Give me with Wonder at thy Works to glow,
To grasp thy Vision, and thy Truths to know:
O'er Time's tempestuous Sea to reach thy Shore,
And live, and sing, where Time shall be no more.

You see, *Aspasio*, I have been studying the Volume of Nature; endeavouring to read its capital Characters, and

tains, Wells, which lie in the Bosom of the Soil; and are Sources of Fertility and Plenty.—*The precious Things brought forth by the Sun*, must certainly denote the Herbs, Plants, Trees, and all Manner of *Vegetables*, with their respective Fruits.—*The precious Things thrust forth by the Moon*, may probably refer to the *mineral* Kingdoms; in the Formation of which, that Ruler of the Night may have a considerable Influence. The Moon is confessedly the Parent of Tides; and may put in motion those bituminous and saline Fluids, which, circulating through the Pores of the Earth, and fixing in Beds of homogeneous Matter, are supposed to commence Minerals.—As our sacred Philosopher has already specified the vegetable Tribes, and (if I mistake not) the Beds of Fossils, *the principal Things of the Mountains and Hills*, should signify the Sheep, Goats, and other valuable Animals, which feed upon those vast Declivities. Then, *the precious Things of the Earth*, may express those Herds of larger Cattle, which have their Pasture in the Plains, Valleys, and lower Grounds. A Sense, which recommends itself from this Consideration, That the Wealth of the Antients consisted chiefly in Cattle.—*The Fulness thereof*, may be a Kind of Recapitulation: a comprehensive Term, including the whole Produce of the terraqueous Globe; the *magnificent Liberality of* JEHOVAH to his People.

* Deut. xxxiii. 16.

and learn some of its instructive Lessons. The Sea has been the Page; but how *superficial* is my Perusal, and no less *scanty* my Knowledge. Little, very little, have I seen or conceived, relating to those Works of Wonder, which the vast unfathomable Deep contains *—the Plants it produces, and the Creatures it nourishes—its stupendous Rocks, and subterranean Caves——the Heaps of Pearl, which are its native Growth; and the Loads of Gold which it has gained by Shipwreck.——*So* superficial are my Views of *CHRIST*; *so* scanty is my Acquaintance with the Gospel.

You, I presume, are sitting at the Feet of that Sublime TEACHER; and attending to the Dictates of *HIS* Mouth, in *whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge* †. Let me promise myself a Communication of *your* Thoughts, as I have freely transmitted a Specimen of *mine*. And I will make no scruple to acknowledge the Superiority of the Exchange; that I receive

Χρυσεα χαλκειων, εκαλομβοι εννεαβοιων.

Or, as the eloquent *Isaiah* speaks; *For Brass you will bring Gold, and for Iron you will bring Silver* ‡: rendering me, by this Intercourse, your more *obliged*, though it is scarce possible for me to be, more than I already am,

Your affectionate

THERON.

P. S. Monsieur *Pascbal*, who was remarkably fond of *Brevity*, makes an odd Excuse for transgressing, on a particular Occasion, his favourite Rule.

* Should the Reader desire to see this Subject, more largely opened, and more fully improved, I would refer Him to *Contemplations on the Ocean*, lately published by my ingenious and pious Friend Mr. *Pearsall*. In which, a refined Fancy and a delicate Philosophy, compose a Chaplet for evangelical Divinity. Uniting some of their beautiful and fragrant Flowers, to adorn the Gospel of GOD our SAVIOUR---to quicken and refresh the Spirits of his People---to invite and win the Hearts of the Disobedient.

† Col. ii. 3. ‡ Isai. lx. 17.

Rule. He intreats his Friend to pardon the unusual Length of his Epistle, by assuring Him, *That he had not Time to make it shorter.*—I cannot, it must be confessed, adopt this Philosopher's Apology. For, I have purposely lengthened my Letter, with a View of setting, in this *one* Circumstance, a Pattern for my *Aspasio.*

LETTER X.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I Thank you for your *Letter*, because it entertains and improves me: I thank you for your *Postscript*, because it is my Encouragement and my Apology.—I am set down to write, with a copious Stock of Materials. It will be far more difficult to contract, than to inlarge. I must therefore acknowledge myself obliged to your Candour, for assigning me the *easier* Task.—That Prolixity, which, in others, might be ungenteel and faulty; is, in me, an Act of Complaisance, and Matter of Duty.

Though absent from You, I went with You in your late Ramble. Your descriptive Pen has made me Partaker of the *ideal Delight:* may Divine Grace enable me to share in the *spiritual Improvement!*—When you displayed the Beauties of the Morn, breaking forth from the Obscurity of Night; when you adopted that noble Aspiration from our philosophic Poet; I could not forbear adding—"Thus may the "gracious GOD, who commands the Light to shine "out of the Midnight Darkness, shine into our Hearts; "and give that *incomparably glorious* Knowledge, the "Knowledge of his blessed SELF! Which, though "discernable through all the Tracts of Creation, and "derivable from every Work of his Almighty Hand; "yet no where beams forth with such *complete* and such "*amiable* Lustre, as in the Person of *JESUS CHRIST**."

* 2 Cor. iv. 6.

—Here we behold all the ſublime Perfections of the DEITY, not only manifeſted with inimitable Splendor, but operating for our own Advantage. We behold them, as *Job* ſpeaks, *for Ourſelves* *; and cannot but receive inexpreſſible Refreſhment and Joy from the View.

When you walked beneath the Shade of thoſe huge, horrid, and enormous Cliffs; both amuſed and alarmed at their ſtupendous Magnitude, and frightful Irregularity—When you caſt your Eye upon the wide-expanded Surface of the Ocean—When you ſurveyed the far more unmeaſurable Arches of the Sky——And meditated, in that awful Solitude, on the wildeſt and moſt magnificent Appearances of Nature—I felt the ſame Kind of devout Aſtoniſhment with yourſelf. While the Soul was wrapt in *penſive Stilneſs*, and *pleaſing Dread* †, methought, I heard a Voice, or ſomething like a Voice, from the ſilent Spheres, as well as from the ſounding Seas It ſeemed to echo back, what the mighty Angel, whom *John* ſaw flying in the midſt of Heaven, once proclaimed; "*Worſhip* HIM, *who made Heaven and* "*Earth, and the Sea, and the Fountains of Water* ‡. "Worſhip Him, who ſtretched out that azure Pa"villion with ſuch amazing Grandeur: who mea"ſured yonder World of Waters, in the Hollow of "his Hand: and before whom, this immenſe Range "of mountainous Cliffs, is but as Duſt upon the "Scale."

When you deſcribed the *diſmal Situation* of a Wretch, expoſed on the Edges of the tremendous Precipice; hanging over the ragged Rocks, and the unfathomable Gulf; and cleaving only to a ſlender, treacherous, breaking Bough: how heartily did I join

* Job xix. 27.

† It ſeems to have been ſuch a Kind, not of *anxious* but of *pleaſing* Dread, which ſeized the Diſciples on the Mount of Tranſfiguration: ησαν γαρ εκφοβοι, for they were ſtruck with a profound, but delightful Awe. *Delightful*, otherwiſe it is not eaſy to conceive, why *Peter* ſhould propoſe to *build Tabernacles* there, or how He could wiſh to continue in thoſe Circumſtances, *Mark* ix. 6.

‡ Rev. xiv. 7.

join in your adoring Acknowledgments to that kind, interposing, blessed Hand, which rescued us both from an infinitely more threatening and dreadful Danger! Rescued us, as *Slaves*, from the Dominion of the Devil: snatched us, as *Brands*, from the inextinguishable Burnings. And bid Us (O marvelous, superabundant Goodness!) bid Us possess the *Liberty* of Righteousness; bid us inherit the *Kingdom* of Heaven.

When You mention the past Indolence, and the present Fervour of your Prayers, I could not forbear reiterating my Praises to GOD on your Behalf. This is a Proof, my dear *Theron*, that you are going in the Way everlasting; for it is written, *They shall come with Weeping, and with Supplications will I lead them* *. This is the Work of the HOLY GHOST, dwelling in your Heart; for what saith the Scripture? *I will pour upon them the Spirit of Grace and of Supplication* †. And our LORD Himself mentions this, as the Indication of a true Conversion; *Behold! he prayeth* ‡.——Had not *Saul* prayed before? Yes; and made long Prayers too. But he never, till that Instant, was sensible of his undone and damnable Condition. Never cried to GOD from the Depths of his Distress, or from the Depths of his Heart. Nor ever solicited the Throne of Grace, in the all-prevailing Name of *JESUS CHRIST*.—His Prayers till then, were somewhat like the *Motes*, which fluctuate to and fro in the Air, without any vigorous Impulse, or any certain Aim. But, in that Hour, they were like the *Arrow*, which springs from the strained Bow; and, quick as Lightning, flies to the Mark.

I was pleased to find You, in the Process of your Letter insensibly forgetting the Narrative; and so engaged by the Subject, that you spoke not as the *Relater*, but as the *Beholder*.—Thus may We always be affected, when We study the Oracles of Truth. Study them, not as cold unconcerned Critics, who are only to judge of their Meaning; but as Persons *deeply*

* Jer. xxxi. 9. † Zech. xii. 10. ‡ Acts ix. 11.

interested in all they contain. Who are particularly addressed in every Exhortation and directed by every Precept. Whose are the Promises, and to whom belong the precious Privileges.—When We are enabled thus to *realize* and *appropriate* the Contents of that invaluable Book; then we shall taste the Sweetness, and feel the Power of the Scriptures. Then We shall know, by happy Experience, that our Divine MASTER's Words, are not barely Sounds and Syllables, but *they are Spirit and they are Life* *.

I was still more agreeably entertained with your Picture of *Commerce*, and of the Advantages We receive from *Navigation*. One Advantage however, I can specify, which is greater than any, greater than all, You have celebrated. An Advantage, which will endear and ennoble Navigation, so long as the Sun and Moon endure. The Gospel, my dear Friend, the *glorious Gospel* came to our Island through this Channel. The Volume that comprizes it, and the Preacher that published it, both were imported by Shipping. And may We not say, with the inraptured *Isaiah? How beautiful are the Feet of them, that bring good Tidings; that publish Peace; that bring good Tidings of Good; that publish Salvation: that say unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth* †. It is pleasant to hear their Voice; pleasant to contemplate their Message; and pleasant even

* John vi. 63.

† *Isai.* lii. 7. Never did Language bespeak an *inraptured* Soul, more significantly than this sacred Exclamation. The Prophet is all Wonder and all Joy. He is so enamoured with his Subject, and so captivated with the Glory of the *Gospel*, that He can never say enough of its Excellencies—*Good Tidings*; the very best, that Earth could receive, or Heaven proclaim. *Good Tidings of Good*; a most comprehensive Good; a Collection of every Blessing; or all good Things in one. *Publish Peace*; Peace with GOD, the everlasting King; and that sweet Peace of Conscience, which the whole World cannot give. *Publish Salvation*; or that Gift of Righteousness which is the meritorious Cause, together with that Spirit of Liberty and Spirit of Adoption, which are the rich and grand Constituents of Salvation. *They say unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth*; not Sin and Satan, not Lust and Appetite, oppressive Tyrants and worse than *Egyptian* Task-Masters, but the All-wise and infinitely Gracious JEHOVAH; He, even He, setteth

even to behold, the Ground on which they trod, or the very Waves over which they sailed.——This made the holy Prophet rejoice in Spirit, when he foresaw the extensive Spread of his MASTER's Glory, and the certain Commencement of *our* Happiness. This put into his Mouth that affectionate and congratulatory Address; which, in a very particular Manner, is directed to Us and our Countrymen: *Sing unto the LORD a new Song, and his Praise from the Ends of the Earth: ye that go down to the Sea, and all that is therein; ye Isles, and the Inhabitants thereof. Let the Wilderness and the Cities thereof lift up their Voice; let the Inhabitants of the Rock sing, let them shout from the Top of the Mountains. Let them give Glory unto the LORD; and declare his Praise in the Islands* *.

We read, in *Ezekiel*, of the *most magnificent* Fleet, that ever ploughed the Seas. The Masts were of Cedar †, and the Benches of Ivory. Fine Linen, beautified with Embroidery, floated to the Winds, and formed the Sails. Blue and Purple rigged the Vessel, and clothed the meanest Mariner.——Let Us suppose, that the Freight of this splendid Navy, was proportioned, in Value, to its sumptuous Tackling. Yet how poor, how despicable were either, were both, if estimated with the Treasures of the Gospel: those *divine Treasures*, which spring from the Imputation of our REDEEMER's Righteousness! And which have much the same kindly Influence on *religious Practice*, as Navigation, with all her Improvements, has upon Traffic.——Give me leave to confirm this Assertion, by selecting a few Instances, and applying them in a few Interrogatories.

One of the Benefits, proceeding from the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, is *Pardon*, Pardon, not partial, but complete. A Pardon of each Sin, be it ever so *heinous*; a Pardon of all Sins, be they ever so

fetteth up his pure, his peaceful, his spiritual Kingdom, in the Believer's Heart, in the *Gentile* Nations, and in all Lands.

* Isai. xlii. 10, 11, 12. † Ezek. xxvii. 5, *&c.*

numerous: For thus saith GOD the LORD, who sent both his Prophets and Apostles, preaching Peace by *JESUS CHRIST*; *I will pardon* ALL *their Iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me* *.—To learn the desirable Nature of this Blessing, let Us step back into the Annals of History, and attend a traiterous unhappy Nobleman to his *vindictive* Exit. His Body is demanded by the Ministers of Justice. Reluctant and trembling, He is conducted to the Scaffold. There, the alarmed Criminal sees the mourning Block. Sees the glittering Ax. Sees the Coffin prepared for his Corpse. Sees thousands of anxious Spectators, waiting, with eager Looks and throbbing Hearts, the fearful Catastrophe. In a Word; he sees Death advancing, with all the Solemnities of *Horror* and *Woe*.—Time elapses. The preparatory Ceremonies are dispatched. The fatal Moment is arrived. No longer Respite can be allowed. He must submit to immediate Execution. Accordingly he prostrates himself to receive the Stroke. But——seized with new Terrors, at the poised Ax, and approaching Blow, He starts from the dangerous Posture—Again he bends, and again snatches his Neck from the impending Edge.—A third Time, He lifts his pale Countenance, to the pitying Crowds, and departing Light.——Once more He bows to the Block, and once more raises his Head, in *wishful Expectation* of the Royal Clemency.——Had a Messenger appeared, at this critical Instant, with a Shout of Joy upon his Tongue, and a sealed Pardon in his Hand; O! how transporting the News! *Inexpressibly welcome* the Favour!——What was denied to his passionate Desires; denied to the importunate Solicitations of his Friends; is freely offered to Us in the Gospel of *CHRIST*: a Pardon of infinitely higher Consequence; which obliterates Millions and Millions of rebellious Acts: which extends its blessed Effects, not merely through the little Span of Life, but beyond the Gates of the Grave—beyond the Boundaries of Time—through all the Ages of Eternity.

How

* Jer. xxxiii. 8.

How unfathomable is that immenſe Flood, on which my *Theron* lately exerciſed his Contemplation! The toiling Plummets, with all their Length of Cordage, are unable to find a Bottom. Were the hugeſt Millſtones, or the higheſt Towers, or the moſt ſpacious Cities, caſt into that prodigious Gulf, they would be totally overwhelmed, and irrecoverably loſt. Therefore the inſpired Prophet, to ſhew the *boundleſs* Extent of the divine Mercies in *JESUS CHRIST*, and to denote the *Fulneſs* of their Pardon who are cleanſed in the REDEEMER's Blood, hath illuſtrated both by this grand Similitude. *Thou wilt caſt all their Sins into the Depths of the Sea* *.——Not one, or a few, but *all* their Sins —— not barely behind thy Back, but into the *Sea*——and not into the ſhallow Parts, but into the very *Depths* of the Ocean——ſo that they ſhall never riſe up in Judgment; never be taken notice of; no, nor ever be remembered any more.

With an Act of total Indemnity, let Us join a thorough *Reſtoration* to *Favour*.—If the Wrath of an earthly King be as *the Roaring of a Lion* †; how much more tremendous is *His* Indignation, who is able to caſt both Body and Soul into Hell! If the Favour of an earthly Sovereign be *as Dew upon the Graſs*; how much more deſirable and delightful HIS Lovingkindneſs, whom all Things in Heaven and Earth obey! —By the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*, we are freed from all foreboding Apprehenſions of the former, and eſtabliſhed in the comfortable Poſſeſſion of the latter. The Goſpel renews and ratifies that joyful Proclamation of the angelic Hoſt, *Peace on Earth, and Good will to Men* ‡. GOD is not only pacified towards Believers, but well pleaſed with them in his dear SON. They are the Objects of his complacential Delight, and He rejoices over them to do them Good.

Nay, they are made Children, *Sons and Daughters, of the LORD Almighty* §. And if Sons, then Heirs

* Mic. vii. 19. † Prov. xix. 12.
‡ Luke ii. 14. § 2 Cor. vi. 18.

of GOD, and joint Heirs with *CHRIST**.—— The chief Captain mentioned in the *Acts*, purchaſed his Freedom of the Imperial City *Rome*, with a great Sum of Money †. If ſuch a little tranſient Immunity, was ſo valuable in his Eſteem; who can expreſs the Worth, who can conceive the Dignity, of this divine Adoption? Yet it belongs to Thoſe, who receive the Goſpel, and are intereſted in *CHRIST*.—They have Acceſs to the Omnipotent BEING; ſuch free and welcome Acceſs, as a beloved Child to an indulgent Father. To Him they may fly for Aid, in every Difficulty; and from Him obtain a Supply, in all their Wants.——GOD, as the ſacred Charter runs, IS THEIR GOD. All his lovely, all his adorable Perfections, are their glorious Inheritance, and exceeding great Reward. That eternal Power, to which nothing is impoſſible, exerts itſelf as their *Guard*; and that unerring Wiſdom from which nothing is concealed, acts as their *Guide*. His very Juſtice is no longer an incenſed Adverſary, demanding Vengeance or meditating Deſtruction; but a faithful *Guarantee*, to provide for the punctual Execution of the REDEEMER's Treaty, and their complete Enjoyment of its various Bleſſings.—What a Privilege is this! Rather what a *Cluſter* of Privileges is Here! Weigh the Kingdoms of the World; caſt all the Glories of them into the Scale; and they will be found, when compared with theſe divine Prerogatives, *emptier* than the Bubble that burſts, *lighter* than the Spark that expires.

In the Goſpel are given exceeding great and precious Promiſes. Of ſuch *Value*, that they were procured by the Blood of *CHRIST*; of ſuch *Certainty*, that they are ratified by the Oath ‡ of JEHOVAH. So *durable*, that, though all Fleſh is Graſs, and all the Goodlineſs thereof as the Flower of the Graſs, this Word of our GOD abideth for ever §; ſo *efficacious*, that there are no ſuch Cordials to revive our fainting, and

* Rom. viii. 17. † Acts xxii. 28.
‡ Heb. vi. 17. § 1 Pet. i. 23.

and no such Bulwarks to secure our indangered Souls. With these the Bible is as richly replenished, as the clear midnight Sky is bespangled, with Stars. They *are all Yea and Amen*, consigned over as a sure unalienable Portion, *to them that are in JESUS CHRIST* *.

Another Benefit, given in consequence of the REDEEMER's Righteousness, is the *sanctifying* SPIRIT. A most comprehensive Blessing this! Our SAVIOUR intimates, that it concludes every heavenly Gift, is an Assemblage of all good Things †. —How singular a Comfort must it be to blind *Bartimeus*, to have his Eyes opened, and behold the all-cheering Light of the Sun ‡! So, and far more comfortable, are the inlightening Influences of the blessed SPIRIT; when they shine upon the wretched Creature, who sits in Darkness and the Shadow of Death —How peculiar a Mercy for the impure and abhorred *Leper*, to be healed of his inveterate Disease §! To feel the soothing Sensations of Ease, where Sores rankled, and Pain raged! Instead of infeebling Languors and loathsome Deformity, Vigour braces his Limbs, and Comeliness blooms in his Countenance §. Equally benign and equally salubrious, is the Agency of the Divine SPIRIT, on our depraved, polluted sensual Minds.—How signal was the Recovery, and how welcome the Change! When that unhappy Creature, so wildly agitated by a *mischievous Daemon*, was reinstated in the peaceful Possession of Himself and his Faculties! When, instead of unnaturally cutting his own Flesh, or committing barbarous Outrages on innocent Travelers, He sat composed and attentive at the Feet of *JESUS* ‖! Receiving heavenly Instruction from his Lips, and learning the Meekness of Wisdom from his Example! So salutary and beneficial is the transforming Power of the HOLY GHOST the Comforter: softening the rugged, sweetening the morose, and calming the passionate Temper.——It is undoubtedly

* 2 Cor. i. 20. † Compare *Matt.* vii. 11. with *Luke* xi. 13. ‡ Mark x. 52. § Matt. viii. 3. ‖ Mark v. 15.

doubtedly the utmoſt Improvement and the higheſt Happineſs of our Nature, to have the Image of the bleſſed GOD reinſtamped on our Hearts. This is an Earneſt, and an Anticipation alſo, of endleſs Felicity. A *Bud* which will open in Heaven, and ſpread into immortal Glory. A *Dawn*, which will ſhine more, till the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſes, and brightens it into everlaſting Day. This Bud the ſanctifying SPIRIT ingrafts, this Dawn the Grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* diffuſes, in the barren and benighted Soul.

In a Word; receive this Righteouſneſs, and You have a Title to all Bleſſings, whether they be preſent or future, bodily or ſpiritual, temporal or eternal. From the neceſſary Conveniencies of Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on; even to the Crowns of Glory, and the Fulneſs of Joy; *all, all,* are owing to our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs.——You ſee, now, *Theron*, That our Scheme, has no Tendency to impoveriſh your ſpiritual Condition, or diminiſh your Riches: any more than thoſe Tracts of Water, which ſurround our Iſland, are detrimental to the Wealth of its Inhabitants. Detrimental! No; they are an inexhauſtible Source of Treaſure. They convey to our Uſe the choiceſt Accommodations, and the moſt elegant Delights. Such as would in vain be expected, if the whole Ocean was converted into the fineſt Meads, and moſt fertile Paſtures. *So*——but to apply this Compariſon, would foreſtal your principal Queſtion.

" Do not theſe Favours, though unſpeakably pre-
" cious in themſelves, tend to the Introduction or
" Support of Ungodlineſs?"——Quite the Reverſe. Have We *Redemption* through our *SAVIOUR*'s Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of our Sins? We are redeemed, not that We may ſink in Supineneſs, or launch into Licentiouſneſs, but that We may be a peculiar People, zealous of good Works *.—Are We made the *Children* of GOD? Then let our Light ſo ſhine before Men, that others, ſeeing our good Works, may

* Tit. v. 14.

may glorify our FATHER which is in Heaven *. This is the genuine Conſequence of ſuch a Doctrine, and the proper Effect of ſuch a Benefit.——Are We veſted with ſacred *Privileges!* Theſe admoniſh Us, theſe urge Us, to walk worthy of HIM, who hath called us to his Kingdom and Glory †. Shall the Citizens of Heaven be animated with no higher Views, than the Slaves of Appetite, and Drudges of the World?—Are We conſtituted *Heirs* of the *Promiſes?* The Grace which they aſcertain, is intended to make Us Partakers of a Divine Nature ‡; and the Encouragement which they adminiſter, incites Us to cleanſe Ourſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, incites Us to perfect Holineſs in the Fear of GOD ‖.—Such high Immunities are a moſt endearing Perſuaſive, not to diſgrace, but magnify, not to provoke, but pleaſe, their unſpeakably beneficent AUTHOR.

I might farther obſerve, that Holineſs is one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed Bleſſings in our Syſtem. Nay, is the very *central* Bleſſing, to which all the others verge; in which they all terminate.——Were We *choſen* from Eternity? It was for this Purpoſe, that We may be holy and unblameable in Love §.——Are We *called* in Time? It is to this Intent, that We may ſhew forth the Praiſes of Him, who hath called Us out of Darkneſs into his marvelous Light **.—— Are We *created again in CHRIST JESUS?* It is, to capacitate Us for acceptable Service, and to furniſh Us unto every good Work ††. *I will put my Spirit within You, ſaith the LORD.* For what End? *That Ye may walk in my Statutes, and keep my Judgments, and do them* ‡‡. Here comes in my *Theron*'s favourite Endowment, ſincere Obedience. Far, very far from diſcarding ſincere Obedience. We would only introduce it, under its due Character, and in its proper Order. *Under its due Character*; as the Fruit, not the Cauſe, of

* Matt. v. 16. † 1 Theſſ. ii. 12. ‡ 2 Pet. i. iv. ‖ 2 Cor. vii. 1. § Eph. i. 4. ** 1 Pet. ii. 9. †† Eph. ii. 10. ‡‡ Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

of our Intereſt in *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs. *In its due Order*; as following, not preceding, the Gift of Juſtification.

Theſe Privileges, my dear Friend, are ſalutary, as the Pool of *Bethesda** They are reſtorative, as the Waters of *Siloam* †. Or like that ſacred Stream flowing from the *Sanctuary*; which healed the Rivers, healed the Sea, and made even the Deſart flouriſh §.——— If Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* had a Tendency, to ſubvert the Foundation of Holineſs; to confirm the hypocritical Profeſſor, in his Neglect of moral Duties; or diſcourage the ſincere Convert, from the Purſuit of real Virtue; it would, doubtleſs, be unworthy of any Acceptation, or rather worthy of univerſal Abhorrence. But I dare appeal, not only to the Nature of the Doctrine and the Reaſon of Things, but to the Experience of All—Yes, of all who *have taſted, that the LORD is gracious* ‖ "Speak, Ye who "are enabled to believe, that GOD is reconciled; "has received the all ſatisfying Atonement; and "placed his SON's Righteouſneſs to your Account! "That He regards You as his Children, and will re"ceive You to his Glory!—Have You not, under "*ſuch* Convictions, felt your Hearts exulting with "conſcious Joy; and every Power of your Souls "ſpringing forward, to glorify your heavenly FA"THER—glorify Him by every Inſtance of Obe"dience, Fidelity, and Zeal?"

Can ſuch invaluable Benefits have a prejudicial Influence on our Practice, if, to the Conſideration of their ſuperlative Worth, We add that *unequalled Price*, by which they were purchaſed?—HE who is high above all Height, humbled Himſelf to be made of a Woman, and born in a Stable; that We might be admitted into the Family of GOD, and exalted to the Manſions of Heaven. And will this great Humiliation, which is the Baſis of our Happineſs, prompt Us

* John v. 4. † John ix. 7. § Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9.
‖ 1 Pet. ii. 3.

Us to look down with *Contempt* on Others, or entertain *arrogant* Thoughts of Ourſelves?

The ONLY BEGOTTEN and the ſupreme Delight of the FATHER, was numbered with Tranſgreſſors, and ranked with Felons; that We might be joined to the innumerable Company of Angels, and aſſociated with Saints in Glory everlaſting. And will any One make this a Precedent or a Plea, for *walking in the Counſel of the Ungodly; for ſtanding in the Way of Sinners; or ſitting in the Seat of the Scornful**?

All manner of Evil was ſpoken of the faultleſs *JESUS*; his bleſſed Name was vilified by blaſpheming Tongues, and his unblameable Conduct blackened with the foulеſt Aſperſions; on purpoſe that We may be applauded, when We are judged; and each hear theſe tranſporting Words, WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT†! Will this embolden Us to *diſhonour* our LORD, and *ſtain* our holy Profeſſion? Shall We from hence be induced to open the Mouths of his Enemies, and furniſh them with Occaſion to ſpeak reproachfully?

HE went galled with the Laſhes of the Scourge, and penetrated with the pungent Thorns; He went, loaded with the execrable Croſs, and marking the Way with his precious Blood; *thus* He went to his ignominious and tormenting Exit: that We may enter into *Sion* with Songs of Triumph on our Lips, and with everlaſting Joy on our Heads. Does this invite Us to go, crowned with Roſe-buds, to the Houſe of *Riot*; or go, muffled in Diſguiſe, to the *Midnight-Revel?* Will it not rather incline Us, to ſit down at his pierced Feet, and bathe them with our Tears, and take Delight § in mourning for our crucified LORD?

Behold!

* Pſalm i. 1. † Matt. xxv. 21.

§ The Sorrow, ariſing from ſuch tender and grateful Views of the crucified *JESUS*, is that evangelical godly Sorrow, which *worketh Repentance unto Salvation not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. And is there not Reaſon——when We conſider the Pains

He

Behold! He hangs on the curſed Tree. There, there He hangs; rent with Wounds, and racked with Pain. He pours his Groans, and ſpills his Blood. He bows his Head, his patient princely Head, and dies—aſtoniſhing, raviſhing Conſideration! He dies for *You* and *me*. And will this harden our Hearts, or arm our Hands, to crucify Him afreſh by any allowed Iniquity? Does not Reaſon ſuggeſt, and Chriſtianity dictate, and all that is ingenuous inforce, the Apoſtle's important Inference? *If One died for All, then they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto Him which died for them* *.

He thought upon Us, long before the Foundations of the World were laid; He remembers Us, now he is exalted to the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Heavens; and will never, never forget Us, through all the Revolutions of Eternity. And is this a Motive to forget his Name; to diſregard his Word; or to imitate the ſhameful Neutrality and Indifference of *Gallio*? Impreſſed with a Senſe of this invariable and everlaſting Kindneſs, ſurely, We ſhall declare Ourſelves, as thoſe Captives in *Babylon*, concerning their dear native City *Jeruſalem*: *If I forget Thee*, O bleſſed *JESUS*, *let my Right-hand forget her Cunning; if I do not remember Thee, let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth* †.

——————Remember Thee!
Ay, my dear LORD, while Memory holds a Seat
In this devoted Breaſt—Remember Thee!
Yes, from the Table of my Memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond Records,
Which Youth and Obſervation copied there,

And

He felt, the Curſe He bore, and the Blood He ſhed—is there not abundant Reaſon to ſay, with *Homer*'s afflicted Hero?

——————Τέλαρπωμεσθα γοοιο.
Iliad. Υ.

* 2 Cor. v. 15, 16. † Pſalm cxxxvii. 5, 6.

And thy Remembrance all alone ſhall live
*Within the Book and Volume of my Brain**.

Is it poſſible, *Theron*, for the contemplation of ſuch Goodneſs, to weaken the Motives, or relax the Springs of Obedience? As ſoon may *lenient Balms* kill, and rankeſt Poiſons cure? Is ſuch a Belief calculated to diſcourage Duty, and patronize Licentiouſneſs? Juſt as much, as *vernal Showers* are fitted to cleave the Earth with Chinks, or Summer Suns to glaze the Waters with Ice.—When *Antony* made an Oration to the Soldiers, on Occaſion of *Cæſar*'s Death; when He ſhewed them their honoured Maſter's Robe, transfixed with ſo many Daggers; when He reminded them of the Victories they had won, under their aſſaſſinated Commander; when He farther informed them, that their murdered General had remembered them in his Will—had bequeathed all his fine Gardens, and beautiful Walks, to their Uſe and Delight;—Heavens! How they took Fire! *Revenge* ſparkled in their Eyes: *Revenge* flamed in their Boſoms: *Revenge* was all their Cry. They flew to the Houſes of the Conſpirators; laid them even with the Ground; and, had they met the Owners, would have torn them Limb from Limb.—Some ſuch Reſentment againſt Sin, will a Senſe of our adored REDEEMER's Sufferings excite: Eſpecially, when ſet home with his bleſſed SPIRIT, and conſidered in Connection with thoſe deteſtable Iniquities, which cauſed them; and with thoſe invaluable Bleſſings, which were procured by them.—Nothing, nothing is ſo effectual, to beget the moſt *irreconcilable Abhorrence* of all Ungodlineſs; to make the Remembrance of it, bitter as Wormwood; the Temptations to it, horrible as Hell.

Let me remind you of an Incident, related by your favourite Hiſtorian *Xenophon*.—*Cyrus* had taken captive the young Prince of *Armenia*, together with his beautiful and blooming Princeſs; whom He had lately married, and of whom He was paſſionately fond. When

* SHAKESPEAR.

When both were brought to the Tribunal, *Cyrus* asked the Prince; what He would give to be reinstated in his Kingdom?—He answered with an Air of indifference; "That, as for his Crown, and *his own* Li-"berty, He valued them at a very low Rate. But, if "*Cyrus* would restore his beloved Princess, to her na-"tive Dignity and hereditary Possessions, He should "infinitely rejoice; and would pay (this he uttered "with Tenderness and Ardour) would willingly *pay* "*his Life* for the Purchase."—Could such a Declaration, so highly endearing, alienate the Affections of the Princess, or induce Her to violate her Fidelity? Let her own Conduct answer the Query. When all the Prisoners were dismissed with Freedom, it is impossible to express how they were charmed with their royal Benefactor. Some applauded his social Virtues. All were *prodigal* of their Praises, and *lavish* in grateful Acknowledgments. And You, said the Prince, (addressing himself to his Bride) what think you of *Cyrus?*—I did not observe Him, replied the Princess.—Not observe Him! Upon what then was your Attention fixed?—Upon that *dear and generous* Man, who declared, "He would purchase my Liberty, at the "Expence of his very Life*"—Was her Heart impressed, were all her Thoughts ingrossed, by that benevolent *Offer?* And shall ours be less affected with the incomparably more tender and endearing Love of *CHRIST?*—He was not only willing, but *actually* laid down his Life, for Us; a Life immensely precious, and of higher Dignity than all Heavens.—He laid down his Life, not for amiable Persons, or worthy Creatures, but for vile Earth, and miserable Sinners.—*Purchasing* thereby for Us and our Children, Privileges of inestimable Worth, and of everlasting Duration.

Will

* Εγω μεν και της ψυχης περιαμην ως μηποτε λαβρευσας ταυτην. XENOPH. *de Cyri Instit.* Lib. III.

Will not such Beneficence, so unmerited, so unequaled, win * the most reluctant, and melt the most obdurate Heart? The Heart, which is not wrought upon by this Miracle of Divine Compassion, must be Steel, must be Adamant; quite impenetrable, and absolutely incorrigible.—" O Thou ever Blessed, thou " All-gracious REDEEMER, *thy Love to Us is* " *wonderful*; *passing*, I will not say, *the Love of Wo-* " *men* †, but the Power of Language, and the Reach " of Thought! Who can hold out against such " charming Attractives? Who can resist such hea- " venly Goodness?—Only let a *Sense* of thy Love be " always warm, always operative on our Minds. This " shall be instead of a thousand *Arguments* to engage, " instead of ten thousand *Motives* to quicken our Obe- " dience."—Other Motives may produce some exter- nal Services, or hypocritical Performances. Terrors may extort the Drudgery of the Hand. Bribes may purchase the Adulation of the Tongue. But this conciliates the Will; this proselytes the Affections; this captivates the very Soul; and makes all its Powers *like the Chariots of Amminadab* ‡, ready, expedite, and active in Duty.

Hear

* *Beneficio*, says one of the Antients, *qui invenit*, *Compedes invenit*. Which fine Sentiment may almost serve as a Comment on the beautiful and tender Declaration of GOD by his Prophet *Hosea*; *I drew them* to Obedience *with Cords of a Man*, *with Bands of Love*. Chap. xi. 4. HE who made, and intimately knows our Frame, knew that these Motives would be most powerful in Operation; most powerful on Creatures, capable of Love, and susceptible of Gratitude. Therefore He calls them, *The Cords of a Man*.—And if a Deliverance from temporal Bondage, if the Settlement of *Israel* in all the Plenty of *Canaan*, constituted so sweet an Incitement to Duty; doubtless, the everlasting Benefits mentioned by *Aspasio*, together with all the endearing Circumstances of their Procurement, must be abundantly more engaging.—May the SPIRIT from on High rend the *Veil* of Ignorance and Inattentibility! Let into our Hearts the Knowledge and Faith of these great evangelical Truths! We shall then want no *further* Demonstration, either of the Propriety of the Remark, or the Efficacy of the Principles.

† 2 Sam. i. 26. ‡ Cant. vi. 12.

Hear the holy Apoſtle, giving an Account of Himſelf and his ſpiritual State. He ſpeaks in Language ſomewhat ſimilar, though greatly ſuperior, to the Profeſſion of the *Armenian* Princeſs.—" So great is the " Glory, ſo rich is the Grace, ſo ſuperabundant are " the Merits of my REDEEMER, *that I am deter-* " *mined to know nothing but CHRIST JESUS and* " *Him crucified* *."—Aſk the ſame zealous Apoſtle; *What* prompted Him to ſuch indefatigable Diligence, and animated him with ſuch invincible Fortitude? *Why* did He decline no Toil, and dread no Danger; rejoice in Tribulation, and glory in Reproach †; welcome Perſecution, and defy Death? This is his Reply; " *The Love of CHRIST conſtraineth* ‡ *me*; " beareth me on, with much the ſame ſtrong, ſteady, " prevailing Influence, which Winds and Tide ex- " ert, when they waft the Veſſel, to its deſtined " Harbour."

Shall

* 1 Cor. ii. 2.

† That ſupreme Affection to the bleſſed *JESUS*, which reigned in the Hearts of his primitive Diſciples, could never have been ſo emphatically diſplayed by any Strokes of Eloquence, as by their own chearful and heroic Manner of expreſſing themſelves, with relation to their Sufferings.—Far from regretting, *I take pleaſure* (ſays the Apoſtle) *in Afflictions*; and embrace them, when occurring in my Divine MASTER's Service, with a real Complacency, ευδοκω. 2 Cor. xii. 10.—*To you*, adds the ſame Apoſtle, and ſpeaks in a congratulatory Strain, *it is given* (εχαρισθη) as a deſirable Privilege, *to ſuffer* for the adorable *JESUS*, Phil. i. 29.—St. *Luke*, recording the abuſive and cruel Outrages, committed on two Diſciples, for preaching boldly in the Name of *CHRIST*, uſes a Phraſe remarkably gallant and ſpirited; *They departed from the Council rejoicing*, ὁτι κατηξιωθησαν ατιμασθηναι, *that they were counted worthy to ſuffer Shame*; had the *Honour* of being *vilified* and *reproached*, in ſo venerable and glorious a Cauſe. —This Paſſage is a fine Exemplification of the Figure, which Rhetoricians ſtyle *Oxymorum*. And *Horace*'s—*Dulce Periculum*—*Splendidè mendax*—*Quo beatus Vulnere*—ſeem flat and jejune upon the Compariſon. *Acts* v. 41.

‡ Could You ſtation a Coward, in the Midſt of a numerous *Army* advancing to the Battle; or rather, could you place a Boat on the impetuous Cataracts of the *Nile*; You would *ſee* what is meant by the ſignificant Word, συνεχει. 2 Cor. v. 14.

Shall we hear what another Diſciple, one of the moſt advanced Proficients in Divine Love, ſays upon the Subject? One, who learned his Knowledge, not in the School of Philoſophy, but on his SAVIOUR's Boſom. *This is the Love of GOD, that we walk after his Commandments* *. This is the natural Fruit, this the certain Evidence, of Love to that glorious, tranſcendent, and adorable BEING. What? Not that We ſupinely neglect, much leſs that We profanely violate, his ſacred Precepts; but that with Aſſiduity and Delight, We make them the Rule of our Conduct ——*Charity edifieth* †: this Divine Love, far from razing the Foundations, far from demoliſhing the Structure, *buildeth up* ‡ the fair Fabric of univerſal Godlineſs.

Let me borrow an Illuſtration from your own Letter. When a Pebble is caſt into the ſmooth Canal, it moves the Center, and forms a Circle. The firſt creates a ſecond: the ſecond breaks into a third: they continue to multiply and expand themſelves, till the whole Surface is covered with circular Undulations. Thus, the Love of an All-gracious REDEEMER §, when *ſhed abroad in the Soul by the HOLY GHOST*,

* 2 John *ver.* 6. † 1 Cor. viii. 1. ‡ Οικοδομει.

§ I cannot but think, the Reaſoning is much more juſt, and the Principle much more efficacious, in *Aſpaſio*'s Manner of ſtating the Affair, than in the following famous Lines:

Self-love but ſerves the virtuous Mind to wake,
As the ſmall Pebble ſtirs the peaceful Lake:
The Center mov'd, a Circle ſtrait ſucceeds,
Another ſtill, and ſtill another ſpreads.
Friend, Parent, Neighbour, firſt it will embrace,
His Country next, and next all human Race:
Wide and more wide th' O'erflowings of the Mind
Take every Creature in of every Kind.

Self-love too often acts on the Affections, as a Blaſt on the Leaves, *ſhrivels* and *contracts* them. But the Love of *CHRIST*, like a vernal Sun on the tender Buds, *opens* and *expands* them; till they become wide, as the Extent of his gracious Redemption; wide as the Compaſs of his rational Creation.—By Self-love I am almoſt neceſſarily determined to *malign* the Perſons, who croſs my Inclinations, and obſtruct my Intereſts. From the Love of *CHRIST*,

*GHOST**, will diffuse itself through every intellectual Faculty, and extend to every Species of Duty. Till the whole Heart is filled with the Image, and the whole Behaviour regulated by the Law of the Blessed GOD.—So that I am persuaded, there is a great deal of Truth and Solidity, as every One must acknowledge, there is a peculiar Spirit and Beauty, in the Apostrophe of our Poet;

Talk they of Morals? O thou bleeding Love!
Thou Maker of new Morals to Mankind,
The grand Morality is Love of THEE†.

You mentioned the *Loadstone*, as most signally and most extensively serviceable in the sea faring Business. Such is *Faith*, so efficacious, in practical *Christianity*. —This, perhaps, You think a scanty and defective Principle. The Property of shewing the northern Part of the World, may seem equally mean and inconsiderable. But as the one is the very Soul of Navigation, the other is the very Life of Holiness.—— It is somewhat like the Stone, which the *Babylonian* Monarch saw in his Dream, *cut from the Rock without Hands*‡. Which though despicable to human Appearance, was mighty in Operation; destroyed the superb Statue; became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth. Thus will Faith exert and diffuse its kindly, yet triumphant Energy; to every Corruption, that it may be subdued; to every Virtue, that it may be cherished.

Faith

CHRIST, I have a cogent Reason, and a most prevailing Inducement to love my very *Enemies*.—How does St. *Peter* analyze this Subject? not in Mr. *Pope*'s, not in Lord *Bolingbroke*'s Method. *Godliness*, or a supreme Love to the Gracious GOD, He represents as the Root or *Trunk*: then *brotherly Kindness*, or an affectionate Regard to Relations, Friends, Neighbours, as some of the grand and master *Branches*: after this *Charity*, or a diffusive Good-will to all Mankind, as the Spread of *Boughs*, which complete and adorn the Tree. 2 *Pet.* i. 7.

* Rom. v. 5. † Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

‡ Dan. ii. 34.

Faith is a real Perſuaſion, That the Bleſſed *JESUS* has ſhed his Blood *for me*, and fulfilled all Righteouſneſs *in my Stead*: that through this great Atonement and meritorious Obedience, He has purchaſed, even *for my* ſinful Soul, Reconciliation with GOD, ſanctifying Grace, and every ſpiritual Bleſſing *.

When the ALMIGHTY ſunk the Cavities of the Ocean, and repleniſhed them with the liquid Element, He provided an inexhauſtible Source of Moiſture, for the Refreſhment of every Animal, and the Nutriment of every Vegetable. In like manner, where-ever He works this true Faith, He plants the Seed of *univerſal* Holineſs, and provides for the Propagation of *every* Virtue. This Perſuaſion of the Divine Good-will, overcomes our natural Reluctance, and excites a fervent Deſire, to pleaſe our moſt merciful FATHER. This Experience of the abundant Grace of *CHRIST*, attracts and aſſimilates the Soul, turning it into his amiable Likeneſs, "as the Wax is turned to the imprinted Seal."—What will be the Language of ſuch a Perſon?

"Did my exalted MASTER empty Himſelf and "become poor, that his moſt unworthy Servant might "be *filled with all the Fulneſs of GOD* †? And "ſhall not I chearfully deny myſelf the expenſive "Pleaſures of the World, that I may have ſomewhat "to beſtow on his needy Children?—Has the Death "of *CHRIST*, as a Puniſhment, ſatisfied the moſt "rigorous Juſtice for my Sins; as a Price, has it re"deemed me from every Evil; and, as a Sacrifice, "made my Peace with GOD Moſt High? And "ſhall I not, by theſe *Mercies* of my dying LORD, "be

* This Definition of *Faith* may poſſibly, at the firſt View, diſſatisfy and alarm even ſome pious People; including, as they apprehend, too great a Degree of *Aſſurance*. But if they pleaſe to take it in *Connection*, with the Explanation and Adjuſtment, delivered in the *Sixteenth Dialogue*, I hope, all Cauſe of Diſapprobation or Surpriſe will vaniſh. I flatter myſelf, that the Sentiment will be found, not only comfortable for the Sinner, but agreeable to Scripture; and truly *unexceptionable*, as well as highly *deſirable*.

† Eph. iii. 19.

" be induced to present all the Members of my Body,
" and all the Faculties of my Soul, as a *living Sacri-*
" *fice* * to his Honour? To be employed in his Ser-
" vice, and resigned to his Will?—Do I believe, that
" my SAVIOUR has not only rescued me from
" Hell, but established my Title to all the *Blessings*
" included in the Promises, and all the *Felicity* laid up
" in Heaven? And can I neglect to seek those inva-
" luable Blessings, or forbear to aspire after this im-
" mense Felicity? Can I be so *ungrateful* as to af-
" front, so *insensible* as to forget, the infinitely bene-
" ficent AUTHOR of both?—Am I persuaded,
" that the PRINCE of Peace is entered into Glory
" as my *Forerunner* †, and has prepared Mansions of
" Bliss for my final Reception? And shall I not fol-
" low Him thither in my Hopes and my Affections?
" Be as a Pilgrim below, and have my Conversation
" above?—Is not this a most sweet and effectual Me-
" thod of gaining my Heart, and if my Heart, then
" all my Powers, to his blessed Self?"

Such, my dear *Theron*, will be the *Effects* of Faith. Therefore, it is not in vain, much less to the Discouragement of real Virtue, that the Scripture lays such a Stress upon Faith; so frequently urges the Importance and Necessity of Faith; represents Faith, as the principal Work of the Divine SPIRIT, and the great Instrument of receiving Salvation. Because it is a sure, a sovereign Means of *purifying the Heart* ‡, and never fails to *work by Love* §.—Was Faith, as some People are apt to imagine, like a Candle put under a Bushel, or like the Lamps which burn in Sepulchres; it would then be an insignificant Labour to inculcate it, and no better than an empty Flourish of Words, to celebrate it. But nothing is more certain, than that Faith is a *vital*, an *operative*, a *victorious* Principle.

CHRIST is a Store-house of all Good. Whatever is necessary to remove our Guilt, whatever is expedient

* Rom. xii. 1. † Heb. vi. 20.
‡ Acts xv. 9. § Gal. v. 6.

expedient for renewing our Nature, whatever is proper to fit Us for the eternal Fruition of GOD, all this is laid up in *CHRIST*. And all this is received by Faith, for Application, Use, and Enjoyment. ——Accordingly, when *Zaccheus* BELIEVED, He commenced a new Man: his Bowels yearned with Compassion: the rapacious Publican became a Friend to the Needy, and a Father to the Poor *.—— When the *Macedonians* BELIEVED, how eminently was their Spirit ennobled, and their Practice improved! Though pressed with Afflictions, their Souls overflowed with Joy; and even in the deepest Poverty, they signalized themselves by the Abundance of their Liberality †. ——When the *first Converts* BELIEVED, the Change in their Behaviour was so remarkable, the Holiness of their Lives so exemplary; that they won the Favour, and commanded the Respect, of all the People ‡.—— In short; it is as impossible for the Sun to be in his meridian Sphere, and not to dissipate Darkness, or diffuse Light; as for Faith to exist in the Soul, and not exalt the Temper, and meliorate the Conduct.—That my dear *Theron* may be established in Faith, may *increase* in Faith, may *abound* in Faith, is the most affectionate Wish, that Thought can suggest, or Friendship adopt. May his Faith therefore be established like the Mountain-Oaks; increase like the progressive Stream; till it spreads and abounds like the overflowing Flood §.

* Luke xix. 8.

† 2 *Cor.* viii. 2. Here is, especially in the Original, as fine an *Antithesis*, perhaps, as ever was penned. Since my last Notes were so copious, I shall forego the Pleasure of particularizing the Beauties of this Clause. I leave it to the Lover of sacred Literature, to admire the Apostle's Expression, to be charmed with the Spirit of the *Macedonian* Believers, and to derive Edification from both.

‡ Acts ii. 47.

§ These Images We may venture to style *beautiful*, because they are borrowed from the Apostle; βεβαιωμενοι εν τη πιστει. Col. ii. 7. προκοπη της πιστεως. Phil i. 25. υπεραυξανει η πιστις. 2 Thess. i. 3.

I intended to have closed my Letter, and confirmed my Point, by a *very memorable* Story. But however your Patience may persevere, my Time fails, and my Hand is weary The next Post, if nothing unexpected intervenes, shall bring You the Sequel May it, when brought to my Friend, be as *a Nail fastened in a sure Place*, and give the Rivet of Conviction to all these important Truths!—In the mean Time, or rather at all Times, I remain

Cordially and invariably Yours,

ASPASIO.

LETTER XI.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

FAITH in the imputed Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST* is a fundamental Principle, in that invaluable System of sacred and divine Philosophy ——THE GOSPEL. By which the Heavenly TEACHER is continually training up Millions of rational and immortal Creatures for the true Perfection of their Nature; for the final Fruition of their GOD; or, in other Words, for a State of consummate Happiness and everlasting Exaltation.——In this School, may You and I be humble *Students*, and daily *Proficients!* While Others are ambitious of glittering Distinctions, and sounding Titles, may it be our highest Aim, our greatest Glory, to answer the Character——of BELIEVERS! By this Character, the Supreme LORD distinguishes his chosen People, and denominates the Heirs of Salvation.—This Character stands fairest in the Book of Life, and brightest in the Annals of Eternity.——This Character, however neglected or disesteemed among Men, will

will be remembered and had in Honour, when the pompous Names of *Stateſman* and *Generaliſſimo* are known no more.

As Faith is of ſuch ſingular and extenſive Efficacy in genuine Chriſtianity, methinks, I would have all our Meditations *terminate* on its glorious Object, and be calculated to *invigorate* ſo beneficial a Principle.—When we reflect on that ſtupendous Act, the Creation of the World out of Nothing; let us remember, it was *HIS* Act, who *obtained eternal Redemption for Us* When we contemplate that immenſe Theatre of Wonders, the Heavens and their ſhining Hoſts; let Us not forget, that they are all *HIS* Work, who *brought in everlaſting Righteouſneſs* for Us.——Do We turn our Thoughts to the Ocean, that ſpacious and magnificent Canal, which covers more than half the Globe? It was formed by *HIS* Word, and is obedient to *HIS* Will, who *loved Us and waſhed Us from our Sins in his own Blood.* Do We take a View of the Earth, that grand and inexhauſtible Magazine, which furniſhes ſuch a Multiplicity of Conveniencies, for ſo many Millions of Creatures? It is all *HIS* Property, and wholly at *HIS* Diſpoſal, who *emptied* * *Himſelf* for our Sake, and *had not where to lay his Head.*—— For thus ſaith the inſpired Philoſopher; thus ſaith the Oracle of Revelation; *All Things were made* BY *Him, and* FOR *Him* †.

The great CREATOR has *enriched* this habitable Globe with a Profuſion of Good. He has *adorned* it with a Variety, an Order, and a Beauty, which are perfectly charming. He has *ennobled* it with a Dignity, a Sublimity, and a Grandeur, which are at once delightful and aſtoniſhing. In all this, Reaſon cannot but diſcern a clear Manifeſtation of Power, a bright Diſplay of Wiſdom, and a rich Demonſtration of Benignity.——But will the CREATOR himſelf vouchſafe to be made Fleſh, on Purpoſe that He may *obey* and *die* for his guilty Creatures? This is what, neither the utmoſt Penetration of Men, nor the very ſuperior Intelligence of Angels, could ever

* Εκενωσεν εαυτον. Phil. ii. 7. † Col. i. 16.

have demonſtrated, diſcovered, or conceived. This exceeds whatever the Elements have produced, whatever the Sun has beheld, as much as the Extent and Magnificence of the planetary Syſtem exceed the Dimenſions and the Furniture of a Shepherd's Hut.—— To reveal this, is the bleſſed Peculiarity of the Goſpel. To know and believe this, is the diſtinguiſhing Prerogative of a Chriſtian. To *apply* this, to *dwell* upon this, to *connect* this with all our Obſervations of the Univerſe, ſhould be our favourite and habitual Employ. This will improve Wonder into Devotion, and raiſe the Entertainments of Science into the Joy of Salvation. This will render every philoſophical Speculation a Strengthener of our Faith; and make the various Scenes of Nature, a Guide to Grace and a Step to Glory.——When this is done, then all Things attain their proper End; and as they are *by CHRIST*, ſo they are *for CHRIST*.

But I forget myſelf, my Buſineſs, and my Promiſe. I am to eſtabliſh the Point by inconteſtable Fact, not to embelliſh it by looſe Harangue. With Pleaſure I addreſs myſelf to diſcharge the Obligation; and exemplify, in a very memorable Inſtance, the *Power* of Faith on *religious* Practice.——From whence ſhall I fetch my Exemplification? From the Memoirs of the indefatigable Apoſtle of the Gentiles? Here I find one, moſt conciſely, and at the ſame Time moſt forcibly diſplayed.

After theſe Things were ended, ſays the ſacred Hiſtorian, *Paul purpoſed in the Spirit, when He had paſſed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jeruſalem, ſaying, After I have been there, I muſt alſo ſee Rome**.——Who can obſerve, and not admire, this plain unambitious Manner of relating a Series of Labours, the moſt ſignally ſucceſsful, and moſt extenſively uſeful? Nothing in human Conduct ever ſurpaſſed the *Greatneſs* of the one, and perhaps nothing in hiſtorical Compoſition ever equaled the *Simplicity* of the Other.

St.

* Acts xix. 21.

St. *Paul* had already reduced *Epheſus* and *Aſia* to the Obedience of *CHRIST*. He had already brought *Macedonia* and *Achaia* into Subjection to the Goſpel He had long ago erected the Standard, and ſpread the Triumphs of Chriſtianity in the Regions of *Arabia*. Yet, as if He had hitherto atchieved nothing, He bends his Forces towards *Jeruſalem*. Then he marks out *Rome* for the Seat of his ſpiritual Warfare. After this, he forms the ſame beneficent Deſign upon *Spain:* including, in his comprehenſive Plan, the Metropolis and the Boundaries * of the known World.——The Univerſe is but juſt large enough, to be the Scene of his Action; He never diſcontinues the *charitable Campaign*, but with the laſt Breath of his Life; and He ſpeaks of this unintermitted Courſe of arduous and dangerous Services, as if He was only going to make ſome friendly *Viſit*, or join in a Party of innocent *Pleaſure*; *After I have been at Jeruſalem, I muſt alſo ſee Rome* †.

* *Spain* was then ſuppoſed to be the Boundary of the *Weſtern*, as the *Ganges* was reckoned the Extremity of the *Eaſtern* World.

Omnibus in Terris quæ ſunt a Gadibus uſque
Auroram & Gangen. Juv. Sat. X.

† I am quite charmed, I muſt confeſs, with this very *ſimple*, but incomparably *gallant* Manner of the Apoſtle's ſpeaking. Far beyond all the Pomp of Panegyric, it diſplays the Hero.

When a Handful of *Spartans* undertook to defend the Paſs of *Thermopylæ*, againſt the whole Army of *Perſia*; ſo prodigious, it was reported, were the Multitudes of the *Perſians*, that the very Flight of their Arrows would intercept the Shining of the Sun. *Then*, ſaid *Dieneces* one of the *Spartan* Leaders, *We ſhall have the Advantage of fighting in the Shade.*—Juſt before the Battle of *Agincourt*, News was brought to King *Henry*'s Camp, that the *French* were exceedingly numerous; and would take the Field, with more than ſix times the Number of the *Engliſh* Troops. To which the brave Captain *Gam* immediately replied, *Is it ſo? Then there are enough to be cut in Pieces, enough to be taken Priſoners, and enough to run away.*—A commanding Officer, I think, among the Royaliſts, being beſieged by the parliamentary Forces, was ſummoned to ſurrender the Caſtle. The Summons He rejected, and treated with Contempt. Upon this, the Enemy threatened, that,

Which of your *Alexanders*, which of your *Cæsars*, which of all the Heroes renowned in *Grecian* or *Roman* Story, can vie with the Zeal and Magnanimity of this poor, despised Tent-maker? So *poor*, that he was constrained to work with his own Hands, for a Morsel of Bread: so *despised*, that He was frequently treated as the Off-scouring of all Things. Notwithstanding all these Discouragements, what did He not attempt, what did He not accomplish, for the Honour of his MASTER, and the Good of his Fellow-creatures? ——He embarks in a Shallop; He has neither Shield nor Spear; yet he purposes to command the Ocean, and conquer the Globe. What *Greatness* of Soul was here! He expects * nothing but Poverty, Contempt, and Death; yet his Heart is big with the Hope of enriching, ennobling, and saving Ages and Generations. What *Benevolence* of Temper was this!—Should you enquire, concerning this illustrious Champion of the Cross; *Who* were his potent Auxiliaries? None but the Divine SPIRIT.—*What* were his mighty Weapons? Nothing but the Word of Truth and Grace.—— *Whence* proceeded his intrepid, his enterprizing, his all-conquering Resolution? Only from Faith, a lively Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*.

This, I think, is a sufficient Confirmation of my Doctrine.——Nevertheless I have another Instance to produce. One that was exhibited in an Age, when the

that, if He persisted in his Resolution, the Walls should, without farther Delay, be battered to the Ground. *What if they are?* was his Answer. *I am not obliged to rebuild them.*

Such calm and undaunted Sentiments, amidst Circumstances of the most imminent Danger, argue an uncommon *Fortitude* and *Superiority* of Mind. But, if We consider the Nature of the Apostle's Enterprize; that it was nothing less than an open Attack on the Empire of Satan; a declared War against the whole idolatrous World; all which was to be attended with Persecution and Imprisonment, was to end in Martyrdom and Death.—If We consider this, I believe, nothing will appear, at once so humble and so exalted, so modest yet so magnanimous, as the Turn and Air of *his* Expression; *After I have been at Jerusalem, I must also see Rome.*

* Acts xx. 23.

the glorious Object of our Faith ſhone with dim Luſtre, and with diſtant Beams. Yet it may juſtly be admired, and will hardly be eclipſed, by the moſt inlightened among the *Chriſtian* Saints.—To keep You no longer in Suſpence, the Caſe I mean, is that which *Moſes* records, and the Apoſtle celebrates. BY FAITH *Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Iſaac: and He that had received the Promiſes, offered up his only begotten Son* *.—As this is ſo ſingular an Example of the efficacious and triumphant Operation of Faith; unequaled in any Nation of the World, or under any Diſpenſation of Religion; You will give me leave to dwell a little on ſome of its marvelous Circumſtances.

Abraham was an eminent and diſtinguiſhed Servant of the Moſt High GOD. Favoured with peculiar Manifeſtations of the Divine Will, and dignified with the honourable Title of his MAKER's Friend †. Yet even this Man, is haraſſed with a long Succeſſion of Troubles; and, which was reckoned in thoſe Ages the moſt deplorable Calamity, *goes childleſs* ‡.

Long He waits, worſhipping GOD with the moſt patient Reſignation. At length, an Oracle from the LORD gives Him Hope, gives Him aſſurance of a Son. Joyfully he receives the Promiſe, and reſts in humble Expectation of its Accompliſhment.—Several Years run their Rounds, but no pleaſing Infant prattles in his Arms, or is dandled upon his Knees. At laſt, the Handmaid becomes pregnant. But what a *Diſappointment* was here! This is the Son of the Bondwoman, not of the Free.

* Heb. xi. 17. † 2 Chron. xx. 7. Iſai. xli. 8.

‡ There was ſo much Gall in this Calamity, that it embittered every other Species of Happineſs. Viſited by this Affliction, the Patriarch could taſte no Joy in his late ſignal Victory; all his worldly Proſperity was inſipid; and He ſeems to have been incapable of reliſhing any other Comfort; *What wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* Gen. xv. 2.—I would intreat the Reader to take particular Notice of *this* Circumſtance. It will have the ſame Effect upon the Repreſentation of *Abraham*'s Obedience, and the whole Series of his Difficulties, as a *magnifying* Glaſs has upon the Objects to which it is applied.

How afflicting the Caſe of this excellent Perſon! His Kinsfolk and Acquaintance ſee their Olive-branches, flouriſhing round about their Tables. Even his ungodly Neighbours have Children at their Deſire, and leave the Reſidue of their Subſtance for their Babes. But *Abraham*, the Worſhipper of the ALMIGHTY, the Favourite of Heaven—this *Abraham* is deſtitute of an Heir, to ſupport his Name, to propagate his Family, and inherit the Bleſſing—O the Straits! to which the Believer is ſometimes reduced! How does a ſovereign Providence try his Faith, as it were in a Furnace of Fire! Not that it may be conſumed, but refined, and come forth with augmented Luſtre; to the Praiſe of *ever-faithful, all ſufficient* Grace.

GOD is pleaſed to renew the Grant, and aſſure Him more explicitly, That *Sarah* ſhall have a Son. But this Notice comes at a very late Period in Life; when *Sarah* is advanced in Years, and too old, according to the Courſe of Nature, to conceive. However, the pious Patriarch *ſtaggers not through Unbelief*; but *hopes even againſt Hope* *.—Is it improbable? Is it difficult? Nay, is it to all human Appearance impoſſible? So much the fitter for the Exertion, and ſo much the more proper for the Diſplay of Almighty Power.

At laſt, the Gift, ſo earneſtly deſired, is vouchſafed. *Sarah* has a *Child*—a *Son*—an *Iſaac*. One who ſhould be a Source of Conſolation and Delight to his Parents; ſhould *fill their Mouth with Laughter* †, *and their Tongue with Joy*.—With tender Care, doubtleſs, this pleaſant Plant is reared. Many Prayers are put up for his long Life, and great Happineſs. The fond Parents watch over Him, as over the Apple of their own Eye. *Their* Life is bound up in the Life of the Lad ‡.——He grows in Grace, as he grows in Stature. So amiable is his Temper, and ſo engaging his Behaviour, as could not fail of endearing him even to a Stranger; how much more to ſuch indulgent

* Rom. iv. 18, 20.

† *Pſal.* cxxvi. 2. This is the Import of the *Hebrew* Name *Iſaac*.

‡ Gen. xliv. 30.

gent Parents, after so long a State of Barrenness, and so many Expectations so frequently frustrated.

Now, methinks, we are ready to congratulate the happy Sire; and flatter Ourselves, that his Tribulations have an End. That the Storms, which ruffled the Noon of Life, are blown over; and the Evening of his Age is becoming calm and serene.—But *let not Him that girdeth on his Harness, boast Himself, as He that putteth it off* *. Our Warfare on Earth is never accomplished, till We bow our Head, and give up the Ghost. The sharpest, the severest Tryal is still behind. GOD, the supreme and uncontroulable GOD, demands the Child. 'Tis the Will of Heaven, that He make his Exit, just as He arrives at Manhood.—"Where now, *Abraham*, are all thy "pleasing Prospects? How often didst Thou say, in "thy fond delighted Heart; *This same shall comfort "Us concerning our Trouble* †. Many have been my "Sorrows; but this Child shall dry up my Tears, "and bring me to my Grave in Peace.—Alas! This "lovely Flower is to be cut down, in its fairest, fullest "Bloom. All thy shining Hopes are overcast in a "Moment."

Abraham ‡; says GOD——*Abraham* knows the Voice. It is the Voice of condescending Goodness. He had often heard it with a Rapture of Delight.—— Instantly He replies, "*Here I am.* Speak, LORD; "for thy Servant is all Attention." Hoping, no

 doubt,

* 1 Kings xx. 11. † Gen. v. 29.

‡ The Sentence, with which the inspired Historian introduces this affecting Narrative, is unhappily translated in our Bibles; נסה את אברהם *GOD* did *tempt Abraham.*——This Expression seems, more than seems, to clash with the Doctrine of St. *James*, Chap. i. ver. 13. And cannot but sound harsh to those Ears, which have been accustomed to understand by *Tempter* and *Tempting*, Persons utterly odious, and Practices extremely pernicious.——Whereas, the true and natural Signification of the Original is, *He tried* or *explored*. GOD sounded the Depth, and measured the Height of his Servant's Faith; in order to erect an everlasting Monument of the victorious Efficacy of this sacred Principle; and exhibit an illustrious Pattern to all them, who should hereafter believe.

doubt, to receive some fresh Manifestation of the divine *Good-will*, to Himself and his Family; or some new Discovery of the Method, in which the divine *Wisdom* would accomplish the Promises, *I will multiply thy Seed; I will make thy Seed as the Dust of the Earth; and in thy Seed shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed.*

Take thy Son; adds GOD. And might not *Abraham* reasonably expect, that, since his Son was advanced to Years of Maturity, He should be directed, how to settle Him in the World with Honour and Advantage; where to find a virtuous and fruitful Partner of his Bed?—He is commanded, not barely to take his *Son*, but his *only* Son; his Son *Isaac*; whom He *loved*. How must these affecting Images awaken all that soft Complacency, and all that tender Triumph, which are known only to the fondly-feeling Heart of a Parent! Must not such an Introduction, so remarkably endearing, heighten his Expectation of some signal Mercy, to be conferred on the beloved Youth; and would it not render the Blessing peculiarly acceptable, more than doubly welcome?

Was he not then startled? Was he not horribly amazed? When, instead of some renewed Expression of the Divine Favour, He received the following Orders. *Take now thy Son—thy only Son——Isaac——whom Thou lovest—and get Thee into the Land of Moriah, and offer Him there for a Burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains which I will tell thee of* *.

Was ever Message so alarming? Each Word more piercing to parental Ears, than the keenest Dagger to the Heart. Every Clause brings an additional Load of Misery; till the *whole* Command swells into the most accumulated and aggravated Woe.

Abraham, take thy Son.—Who, but *Abraham*, could have forbore remonstrating and pleading, on such an Occasion?——*Ananias*, being charged with a Commission to *Saul* the Persecutor, takes upon Him to argue the Case with his Almighty SOVEREIGN: *LORD, I have heard by Many concerning this Man, how*

* Gen. xxii. 2.

how much Evil He hath done to thy Saints at Jeruſalem; and here He hath Authority from the chief Prieſts, to bind all that call upon thy Name *. Sure it can never be ſafe or expedient, to preſent myſelf voluntarily before Him; who came hither breathing out Threatenings and Slaughter againſt me What is this, but to court Danger; and run, with open Eyes, into Ruin?—— Thus *Ananias:* and, with how much greater Appearance of Reaſon, might *Abraham* have replied?

" *LORD*, Shall I loſe my Child? Loſe Him, " almoſt as ſoon as I have received Him? Didſt " Thou give Him, only to tantalize thy Servant? " Remember, gracious GOD, the Name he bears. " *How* ſhall He anſwer its chearing Import? *How* " ſhall He be a Source of Satisfaction to his Parents, " or the Father of many Nations; if Thou takeſt " Him away in his unmarried State, and the very " Prime of his Years?

" If Sin lies at the Door, let me *expiate* the Guilt. " Let thouſands of Rams, let every Bullock in my " Stalls, bleed at thy Altar. My Wealth, bleſſed " LORD, and all my Goods, are *nothing* in compariſon of my *Iſaac*. Command me to be ſtript of " my Poſſeſſion; command me to roam, as a Fugitive " and a Vagabond in the Earth; and I will magnify " thy holy Name. Only let my Child, my dear " Child, be ſpared.

" Or, if nothing will appeaſe thy Indignation but " human Blood, let *my Death* be the Sacrifice. Upon " me be the Vengeance. I am old and grey headed. " The beſt of my Days are paſt, and the beſt of my " Services done. If this tottering Wall tumbles, there " will be little, or no Cauſe for Regret. But, if the " Pillar of my Houſe, and the Foundation of my " Hopes—if *He* be ſnatched from me, what Good will " my Life do me? *O my Son! my Son! would GOD I " might die for Thee* †.

" If it muſt be a blooming Youth, in the Flower " of his Days, be pleaſed, moſt merciful GOD, to " ſelect the Victim from ſome *fruitful* Family. There " are

* Acts ix. 13, 14. † 2 Sam. xviii. 33

" are thoſe, who abound in Children. Children are " multiplied unto them; and though many were re- " moved, yet would their Table be full. There are " thoſe who have Flocks and Herds; whereas I have " only this one little Lamb *; the very Solace of my " Soul, and the Stay of my declining Years. And " ſhall this be taken away, while all *thoſe* are left?"

Yes, *Abraham*; it is thy Son, and not Another's, that is marked for the Victim.—What Diſtreſs, had He not been ſupported by Faith, what exquiſite Diſtreſs muſt have overwhelmed this affectionate Parent! How could He refrain from crying out, and with a Flood of Tears?—" If the Decree cannot be re- " verſed; if it muſt be the fruit of my own Body; " O! that *Iſhmael*, the Son of the Handmaid—How " ſhall I ſpeak it? My Heart bleeds at the Thought; " at the Thought even of *his* expiring Agonies, and " untimely Death. But as for *Iſaac*, the Son of my " beloved Spouſe, the Son of my old Age, the Crown " of all my Labours—How? How ſhall I ſurvive " ſuch a Loſs? The Blow that goes to his Heart, " muſt be fatal to Us both.

" Yet, if He *muſt* die, and there is no Remedy; " may He not at leaſt expire by a natural Diſſolution? " May not ſome common Diſtemper unlooſe the Cords " of Life, and lay Him down gently in the Tomb? " May not his fond Mother and myſelf ſeal his cloſing " Eyes, and ſoften his dying Pangs by our tender " Offices?"

No, *Abraham*. Thy Son muſt be *ſlaughtered* on the Altar. He ſhall have no other Bed of Death, than the Pile of hewn Wood; no other Winding-ſheet than his own clotted Gore. The ſacrificing Kniſe, and not any common Diſeaſe, ſhall bring Him to his End.—And think not to ſatisfy thy ſorrowing Fondneſs, by paying Him the laſt Honours of a decent Interment. It is the LORD's Will, that He be cut in Pieces; conſumed to Aſhes; and made a *Burnt-offering*. So that nothing ſhall remain, to be preſerved, or embalmed. It ſhall not be in thy Power to ſooth thy Grief, by reſorting to

* 2 Sam. xii. 3.

to his Grave; and weeping at his Sepulchre; and saying—*Here lies Isaac.*

" But if all muſt be executed; GOD grant, theſe " Eyes may never behold the diſmal Tragedy! If my " *Iſaac* muſt be bound Hand and Foot for the " Slaughter; if He muſt receive the Steel into his " Boſom; and welter in his own innocent Blood; " Heaven forbid, that I ſhould *behold* ſo killing a " Spectacle."

Even this Mitigation cannot be granted. Thou muſt not only be an Eye-witneſs of his Agony, but be the *Executioner* of thy *Iſaac*. *Thy* Hands muſt lift the deadly Weapon; *thy* Hands muſt point it to the beloved Breaſt; *thy own* Hands muſt urge its Way, through the guſhing Veins, and ſhivering Fleſh, till it be plunged in the throbbing Heart. GOD will not permit the Work to be done by Another. The Father, the Father muſt be the Butcher.

Is not the wretched Father *ſtunned* and *thunder-ſtruck?* Does He not ſtand fixed in Horror, and ſpeechleſs with Grief. What Words can be mournful enough to expreſs his Sorrows?—Unheard of, ſhocking Affair! Nature *recoils* at the very Thought! How then can the beſt of Fathers perform the Deed?—How ſhall He anſwer it to the Wife of his Boſom, the Mother of the lovely Youth?—How can He juſtify it to the World? They will never be perſuaded, that the GOD of Goodneſs can delight in Cruelty, or authorize ſo horrid an Action—Will they not take up a *taunting* Proverb, and ſay at every Turn? " There " goes the Man, the Monſter rather, that has imbrued " his Hands in his own Son's Blood! This is He that " pretends to Piety; and yet could be ſo ſavage, as " to aſſaſſinate, coolly and deliberately aſſaſſinate an " only Child!"—Might not Thouſands of ſuch Reflections croud into his Thoughts, and rack his very Soul?

But GOD is unchangeable. Poſitive is his Word, and muſt be obeyed. Obeyed immediately too. Take *now* thy Son. The LORD's Command requireth Speed. No Time is to be loſt, in bidding Adieu to his

his Relations, or in fruitleſs Supplications for revoking the Doom.—Nay, *chearfully* as well as inſtantly muſt this Command be fulfilled. The Great JEHOVAH expects Alacrity in his Service ——Prodigious Tryal indeed! Yet not too great for a Faith, which the Divine SPIRIT infuſes, and the Divine SPIRIT ſuſtains.

The Patriarch knew full well, that Obedience is no Obedience, unleſs it be willing and chearful. Therefore He conſults not with Fleſh and Blood. He is deaf to the Arguings of carnal Reaſon, and regards not the Yearnings of paternal Affection. Without a *murmuring* Word, without a *Moment*'s Delay *, He ſets forward on his Journey. Not ſo much as betraying the leaſt Uneaſineſs, to alarm his Wife; nor heaving the leaſt Sigh, to ſurpriſe his Attendants —And canſt Thou, *Abraham*, canſt Thou perſiſt in thy Purpoſe? Can thy Heart firmly reſolve, can thy Hand ſteadily execute, this inexpreſſibly ſevere Taſk? Moſt triumphant Faith indeed! Deſervedly art Thou ſtyled, *The Father of the Faithful* †. Thy Faith is ſtronger than all the Ties of Affection; ſtronger than all the Pleas of Nature, or all the Terrors of Death—even of a Death, far more dreadful than thy own.

And now muſt He travel, during three tedious, and, One would think, moſt melancholy Days. With his *Iſaac* conſtantly before his Eyes; with the bloody Scene continually in his Apprehenſions; and nothing to divert his Mind, from dwelling on every bitter Circumſtance, and all the grievous Conſequences.—*On the third Day*, Abraham *lifted up his Eyes and beheld afar off the* appointed *Place*. His Servants are ordered to keep their Diſtance: while Himſelf, with the Fire and the Knife in his Hands; and his Son, with the Burden of Wood on his Shoulders, *went both of them together*. ——Who does not pity the ſweet Youth, toiling under that Load, which muſt ſoon reek with his Blood, and ſoon reduce him to Aſhes?—Mean while the intended

* For it is written, *He aroſe early in the Morning*. Ver. 3.
† Rom. iv. 18.

tended Victim, wondering to see all these Preparations made, and no proper Animal near, asks this pertinent Question; *My Father, behold the Fire and the Wood! But where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?*——Sure, this endearing Speech, which discovered such a Knowledge of Religion, and such a Concern for its Duties, must rouse the Father's Anguish, and shake his Determination. How can he be the Death of so much Innocence, and so much Piety?

Faith overcomes all Difficulties. Unmoved and inflexible, the Patriarch replies; *GOD will provide Himself a Lamb for a Burnt offering, my Son**. After this He discloses the strange, the startling Secret; "Thou thyself, my dear Child, art destined to this "Purpose. The GOD who bestowed Thee on "my longing Desires, is pleased to require thee again "at my Hand. The LORD gave, and the LORD "taketh away, let Us both adore the Name of the "LORD. Let Us confide in his promised Goodness, and unanimously profess, *Though He slay me, "yet will I trust in Him.*"—It does not appear, that the amiable Youth *resisted* or *gainsayed*. He had Strength enough to oppose, and Speed enough to escape†, the Attempts of an aged Father. Either or

* *Abraham* in this Answer, like many of the other Prophets in their Predictions, seems not to have *thoroughly understood* the Import of his own Words. What He Himself meant, I apprehend, is represented in the Paraphrase of his Speech. Yet GOD so over-ruled his Tongue, that it more fully expressed the divine Decree, than the parental Idea.

GOD will provide Himself a Lamb for a Burnt offering, my Son: Thus the Words are placed in the *Hebrew*. *My Son* comes last, and closes the Reply. That the tender Accents may be left to vibrate on the Father's Ear, and the dear distressing Image continue playing before his Mind.—This, I think, is a Delicacy not to be over-looked, and increases the Pathos of the Narrative.

† According to *Josephus*, *Isaac was*, when He submitted Himself to the Slaughter, about twenty-five Years old. Others think, his Age was thirty three; which makes Him more exactly resemble his suffering LORD. Then his Father must be above a hundred and thirty Years old. Either Account will justify *Aspasio*'s Supposition.

or both of which, the Law of Self-preservation might seem to dictate, and the Light of Reason to justify. But *Isaac* knew, that his Father was a Prophet. In this prophetical Character, He sees and acknowledges the Warrant of Heaven. And since his CREATOR calls, He is content to go.——Excellent *Isaac!* Who does not admire thy Courage? Who is not charmed with thy Resignation? And must We, in a few Minutes, must We see thee a pale, a bloody, a breathless Corpse?

Methinks, I shudder as We draw near the direful Catastrophe. The Altar is built: the Wood laid in Order: all Things are ready for the solemn Service. And *Isaac* offers his willing Throat to the Knife.—Nevertheless, that the Work of Destiny may be sure, and no one Particular relating to a Sacrifice omitted, *Abraham binds his Son.* I have known a stubborn Malefactor, quite unalarmed, when sentenced to the ignominious Tree; not at all impressed, with the most awful Representations of eternal Judgment: yet, when a Person came to measure Him for his *Coffin*, the hardened Wretch was hard no longer. He started; turned pale; and trembled in every Joint —Even such a Circumstance makes no Impression on *Abraham*; neither alters his Purpose, nor changes his Countenance. He measures his *Isaac*; measures those Limbs, which He had so frequently and so tenderly caressed; and if not for the Coffin, yet for immediate Slaughter.

Having bound Him—surprising Resolution!—bound Him for the Sword and for the Flame, He *lays Him upon the Altar on the Wood.* There, now, lies *Isaac*; the dear, the dutiful, the religious *Isaac! Abraham*'s Joy; *Sarah*'s Delight; the Heir of the Promises! There He lies, all meek and resigned; expecting, every Moment, the Stroke of Death to fall.——O Parents! Parents! Do not your Bowels yearn? Is not Humanity itself distressed at the Scene? Say, thou who art a Father, what thinkest Thou of *Abraham*'s Obedience? Couldst Thou, to *such* a Son, have acted *such* a Part?

See!

See! the Father, resolute to the very last, unsheaths the murdering Blade; makes bare the innocent Bosom; and marks the Place, where Life may find the speediest Exit. *His Heart is fixed!* He stretches his Arm; and now, even now, is aiming the mortal Blow—When—rejoice O ye Worshippers of a gracious GOD! Break forth into Singing. Ye that are in Pain for the tried Parent! The LORD Almighty interposes, in this Article of extreme Need *. The ANGEL of the Covenant speaks from Heaven, and with-holds the lifted Hand, in the very Act to strike. GOD, who only intended to *manifest* his Faith, and make it *honourable*, bids Him desist. GOD applauds his Obedience; substitutes another Sacrifice in *Isaac*'s stead; renews his Covenant with the Father; and not only reprieves the Life of the Son, but promises Him a numerous and illustrious Issue. Promises to make Him the Progenitor of the MESSIAH, and thereby a public Blessing to all the Nations of the Earth.

Tell me now, *Theron*, was there ever such an astonishing Effort of Obedience? Such a perfect Prodigy of Resignation? Yet THIS HATH FAITH DONE †.——If you should ask, How was it possible for

* Upon this most seasonable Interposition, the inspired Historian makes a very judicious and edifying Remark. Which seems to be greatly obscured, if not intirely spoiled, by our Translation; *In the Mount of the LORD it shall be seen.* I must confess, I have always been puzzled to find, not only a pertinent Sense, but any Sense at all, in these Words. Whereas, the Original is as clear in its Signification, as it is apposite to the Purpose.—— בְּהַר יְהוָה יֵרָאֶה *In the Mount the LORD will be seen*; or, *In the Mount the LORD will provide.* q. d. "This memorable "Event gave rise to, at least is an eminent Exemplification of, "that *proverbial* Expression, which is commonly used at this "Day. In the Mount of Difficulty, or in the very Crisis of "Need, when Matters seem to be irretrievable and desperate, "*then* the LORD appears as a present Help. Man's Extremity "is GOD's Opportunity." See *Gen.* xxii. 14.

† Heb. xi. 17. *By Faith, Abraham, when He was tried, offered up Isaac.*—The Faith, of which such glorious Things are spoken, to which

for *Abraham* to perform all this, in the Manner described? The Answer is obvious. Because, *Abraham* BELIEVED; or, in other Words, was fully persuaded that the GOD, who had given Him this Son from the *barren* Womb, was able to raise Him again from the *smoking* * Ashes—As the same GOD, who required this Sacrifice, had expressly declared, *In Isaac shall thy Seed be called*; the Patriarch doubted not, but the Promise would, in a Way known to infinite Wisdom, be punctually accomplished. Hence he made no Dispute, and felt no Reluctance. The Faith banished every uneasy Apprehension, and neither Fear nor Sorrow had place in his Breast. By Faith He was enabled, *speedily* and *chearfully*, without so much as a parting Tear †, to obey this unparalleled Precept.

And

which such admirable Atchievements are ascribed, throughout this whole Chapter, was a Faith in "the Seed of the Woman," the promised MESSIAH.—Or, could it be demonstrated (which, I will venture to conclude, is impossible) that, in all these heroic Instances of Obedience, there was no believing Regard to *CHRIST*; no Apprehension of his unspeakable Love; no Application of his transcendent Merits; our Argument would not lose its Force, but strike with *redoubled* Energy. For, if a Belief in very *inferior* Manifestations of the divine Goodness, Faithfulness, and Power, wrought so efficaciously on those antient Worthies; how much more victoriously must the same Principle act, under far *brighter* Displays of all the supreme Perfections, in the Person of *JESUS CHRIST!*—I would only add, that so long as this Chapter remains in the Bible, it will furnish an unanswerable Confutation of those Objections, which suppose the Doctrine of Faith to have an unkindly Influence on religious or virtuous Practice. Against all such Cavils, *it will stand fast for evermore as the Moon, and as the faithful Witness in Heaven.*

* He seems to have expected not only the certain, but the *immediate* Restoration of his slain Son. That he should be revived on the very Spot; before He left the Place; so as to accompany his Return. For, he says to his Servants, not *I*, but *We* will go, and worship, and *return*. נשובה Ver. 5.

† This Account, is so *very extraordinary*, that I shall not be surprised, if the Reader finds some Difficulty in giving his Assent to it. Especially, as He may have accustomed Himself to form very different Conceptions of this remarkable Affair; and may possibly be confirmed in a different Train of Ideas; by seeing

And if all this, which would otherwiſe have been utterly impracticable, was wrought by Faith; You need not ſuſpect, of *Weakneſs* and *Inſufficiency*, ſo approved a Principle. Far from enervating, it will invigorate every good Diſpoſition; and inſtead of damping, will give Life to every religious Duty.—Cheriſh Faith, and You will of courſe cultivate Obedience. Water this Root, and the Branches of univerſal Godlineſs will aſſuredly partake the beneficial Effects; will ſpread their Honours, and bring forth their Fruits.—Through the *Power* of Faith, the Saints have wrought Righteouſneſs, in all its magnanimous and heroic Acts.—The *Doctrine* of Faith is called by St. Paul, *A Doctrine according to Godlineſs* *; exquiſitely contrived to anſwer all the Ends, and ſecure every Intereſt of real Piety.

ſeeing a Repreſentation of the Story in a celebrated *Print*. Where the Father appears, claſping his Son in a tender Embrace; bedewing Him with his Tears; and ſuffering as much through Grief, as the devoted Youth is going to ſuffer by the Knife.———But the *Engraver*, I apprehend, had not ſo attentively examined the Circumſtances of the ſacred Narrative, nor ſo carefully compared them with other Paſſages of Scripture, as a judicious and worthy *Friend* of mine. From whom I learnt to conſider this wonderful Tranſaction in the above-repreſented View. And I muſt confeſs, the more I revolve it in my Mind, the more I am convinced of its Propriety.

I flatter myſelf, the Reader will be of the ſame Opinion, if he pleaſes to conſult the Tenth Chapter of *Leviticus*. Where *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the Sons of *Aaron*, are devoured by Fire from before the LORD. Yet *Aaron* is not allowed to mourn, even at ſuch a terrible and afflictive Viſitation. And when, through the Frailty of human Nature, He could not wholly refrain, He durſt not preſume to eat of the Sin offering. *Such Things*, ſays He, *have befallen me, if I had eaten of the Sin-offering, ſhould it have been accepted in the Sight of the* LORD?——Let me add, that we find not the leaſt Indication of ſuch *agonizing* Sorrow, nor indeed of *any* Sorrow at all, in the Hiſtory as related by *Moſes*. Neither could *Abraham* have been a proper Type of the eternal FATHER, making his only begotten SON a Sacrifice for Sin, if He had not willingly offered up *Iſaac*. Indeed to offer willingly, ſeems to have been abſolutely *neceſſary*, in every acceptable Oblation, and every religious Service. See 2 *Cor.* ix. 7. 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 9.

* 1 Tim. vi. 3.

Piety.—The *Grace* of Faith St. *Jude* ſtyles, *Our moſt holy Faith* †; intimating, that it is not only productive of Holineſs, but that the moſt *refined* and *exalted* Holineſs ariſes from this Stock.

Let Us then be diligent to exereiſe, and careful to increaſe, Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*. Let Us maintain the ſame zealous Solicitude for this leading capital Grace, as the renowned *Epaminondas* expreſſed for his Shield. When that gallant General was, in an Engagement with the Enemy ſtruck to the Ground; his Soldiers carried him off, breathleſs and fainting, to his Tent. The very Moment he opened his Eyes, and recovered the Uſe of Speech, he aſked——not whether his Wound was mortal? not whether his Troops were routed? But whether his *Shield* was ſafe?—May We be enabled, my dear Friend, to keep our Shield ſafe! May We be *ſtrong*, be *ſteady*, be *lively* in Faith! Then, I doubt not, We ſhall give Glory to GOD, receive Comfort to Ourſelves, and abound in the Works of the LORD.

Nothing can be more *pertinent* to my Purpoſe, than the Apoſtle's Prayer; That We *may know what is the Hope of our Calling in CHRIST JESUS, and what is the exceeding Greatneſs of his Power to them-ward who believe.* And nothing can be more *expreſſive* of the very Soul of

Your affectionate

ASPASIO.

LETTER XII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

IT is very probable, while I am reading yours, You are peruſing mine. But how unlike is my Friend to the Repreſentation He receives! How unlike

† Jude 20.

like the satisfied; unsuspecting, chearful *Abraham!* Why this *dejected* Air in your Temper? Why those *pensive* Strokes in your Letter?——Let me anticipate your Reply, and make Answer to myself——This Gloom, I trust, is a Sign of approaching Day. Just before the Morning Dawn, the nocturnal Darkness is blackest. And just before the Appearance of the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, the Penitent's Distress is frequently the deepest. I promise myself, the Hour is at Hand, which will *put off your Sackcloth, and gird You with Gladness.*

Another favourable Presage is, That You take the direct and certain Way, to obtain substantial Comfort. The Righteousness of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, after which You inquire, about which You are solicitous, is a never-failing Spring of Consolation. Because it acquits from all Sin; secures from all Condemnation; and renders the Believer unblamable and unreprovable in the Sight of GOD. Therefore says the HOLY GHOST, *His Name is as Ointment poured forth**: even that divinely precious Name—by which He has been celebrated in the preceding Epistles; by which he is distinguished in the Scriptures of Truth; by which, I hope, He will be more and more revealed in my *Theron*'s Mind——THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. The Discovery of Him under this most amiable and glorious Capacity, will indeed be like breaking open a Vial of the richest Unguents. Which not only fill the Room, and regale the Sense, with their delightful Fragrance; but refresh the Spirits, and *rejoice the very Heart.*——Might my Writing, or my Discourse, be as the *Alabaster-box* to contain, to convey, and present these reviving Odours; how highly should I think myself honoured, and how signally my Endeavours blessed!

You ask, "How this Righteousness of the Divine "REDEEMER becomes ours?"——It is a Question, which I receive with the utmost Pleasure; and, with equal Pleasure, shall attempt an Answer. Or rather, as the SPIRIT of our GOD prompted the first

* Cant. i. 3.

firſt, may the ſame unerring GUIDE ſuggeſt the laſt! —This He has abundantly done by his Prophets and Apoſtles So that I need only have recourſe to their Writings, and collect ſome of the Hints, which lie treaſured up in thoſe Storehouſes of Wiſdom.

There We are often told of Union with *CHRIST*. Believers are ſaid to be *in CHRIST* *, and to be *one with CHRIST* †.—What is ſtill higher, and implies a greater Degree of Nearneſs, They are *Members of his Body, of his Fleſh, and of his Bones* ‡. —And, which denotes the moſt intimate Connection imaginable, *They that are joined to the LORD JESUS, are one Spirit* ‖ with Him! As theſe Expreſſions appear dark, and their Senſe lies deep, it has pleaſed our all-condeſcending INSTRUCTOR to illuſtrate them, by a Variety of ſignificant Types, and lively Similitudes. This Remark very opportunely reminds me of an Engagement, which, ſome Time ago I undertook to execute, but have hitherto omitted——To make it evident, that the bleſſed Doctrine, for which We have been pleading, *is deducible from ſeveral Scripture Images*. A ſhort Deſcant upon ſome of the principal, will, I hope, at once diſcharge my former Obligation, and ſatisfy your preſent Inquiry.

This was ſhadowed forth by the coſtly, odoriferous, flowing Unguent, poured upon *Aaron*'s Head; *which ran down upon his Beard, and deſcended to the Skirts* ‖‖‖ *of his Clothing*. So the Merits of our great HIGH-PRIEST are derived down to all the faithful; even thoſe of the meaneſt Station in life, and the loweſt Attainments in Religion.

Was

* Col. i. 2. † Heb. ii. 11. ‡ Eph. v. 30. ‖ 1 Cor. vi. 17.

‖‖‖ Pſal. cxxxiii. 2. What We render *Skirts*, is, in the Original, פִּימְדוֹתָיו *The Mouth*, or, as the Word is tranſlated (*Job* xxx. 18.) *The Collar* of his Garments. It is hardly ſuppoſable, that the conſecrating Oil flowed down to the very Bottoms of the ſacerdotal Veſtments. But it might probably reach the upper Hem, or the Opening round the Neck; what the *Greeks* call περιστραχηλιον —This Senſe will ſufficiently preſerve the Gradation: The *Head*; the *Beard*; the *Clothes*. Which ſeem to denote *CHRIST*, his more advanced Saints, and Believers of a lower Claſs.

Was it not typified by that instructive Vision, which the Prophet *Zechariah* saw? *I have looked, and behold! A Candlestick all of Gold, with a Bowl upon the Top of it, and his seven Lamps thereon, and seven Pipes to the seven Lamps, which were upon the Top thereof: And two Olive-trees by it, one upon the right Side of the Bowl, and the other upon the left Side thereof; which, through two golden Pipes empty the golden Oil out of themselves* *. The *Bowl* and the *Lamps* were a proper Emblem of Believers: who are, by Nature, dry Vessels, and destitute of all Good; yet should shine as Lights, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation.——The *Olive trees*, arrayed in Verdure, and abounding with Sap; always emptying themselves, yet ever full; are a very just Representation of *CHRIST*, of his unchangeable Love, and his inexhaustible Grace——The *golden Pipes*, through which the Olive-branches transmit their Oil, seem to be figurative of Faith, in its various and repeated Actings. By these Channels of Conveyance, the unspeakable Benefits of a REDEEMER are communicated to our Souls, and replenish those empty Basons.

Another Type the Apostle mentions. *The first Adam*, He says, *was a Figure of Him that was to come* †. So eminent a Figure, and corresponding in so many Instances, that He styles our *LORD JESUS the last Adam* ‡. And why? Because, like the first, He was a *Covenant-head* to his People, and transacted in their Stead. Insomuch, that what He did, and what He suffered, both are placed to their Account. Is *Adam*'s Sin imputed to all his natural Offspring? So is *CHRIST*'s Righteousness to all his spiritual Seed.——The Consequences of both, render the Doctrine more intelligible, and the Truth more undeniable. All Men are *judged, condemned, dead* §; doomed inevitably to the Death of the Body, and justly liable to the Death of the Soul, on the Score of *Adam*'s Transgression. All Believers are *acquitted, justified,*

* Zech. iv. 2, 3, 12. † Rom. v. 14. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 45. § Rom. v. 15, 16.

justified, saved *; saved from the first Death, and made Heirs of the Resurrection; saved from the second Death, and intitled to Life eternal; by virtue of *CHRIST*'s Obedience.

This Union with *CHRIST*, was not only prefigured by Types, but is displayed by a Variety of Similitudes, taken from the most familiar Occurrences of Life. By which it appears to be our Divine MASTER's Will, that We should live under the *habitual Belief* of this momentous Truth, and in the *constant Enjoyment* of this distinguished Privilege.—You cannot visit a Friend, or view your Children; You cannot enter your Garden, discourse with your Spouse, or contemplate your own Body, without a Representation and a Remembrancer of this precious Blessing.

CHRIST says to his Disciples, *Henceforth I call You not Servants but Friends* †. Friends are a second Self ‡. St *Paul* speaking of *Onesimus*, uses this remarkable Phrase, *Receive Him, as Myself*; and, which is still more emphatical, *Receive Him, that is mine own Bowels* §. Is not *CHRIST*'s Friendship of the most tender and exalted Kind? Doubtless it must be equal, doubtless it must be superior, infinitely superior to *Jonathan*'s——*Jonathan* loved *David* as his own Soul. But *CHRIST* loved Sinners with a Love stronger than Death. They were dearer to Him than his own inestimable Life.——*Jonathan* exposed Himself to imminent Danger, in vindicating *David*'s Conduct. *JESUS* surrendered himself to certain Death, in making Reconciliation for our Offences——*Jonathan* interceded once and again with his Father in *David*'s Behalf. *CHRIST* ever liveth, to plead his Blood, and make Intercession for Transgressors—*Jonathan stripped Himself of the Robe that was upon Him, and gave it to David, and his Garment, even to his Sword, and his Bow, and his Girdle* ‖. Our REDEEMER, without stripping Himself, has clothed Us (such is the Prerogative

* Rom. v. 19, 21. † John xv. 15.
‡ *Horace* calls *Virgil*, *Animæ Dimidium meæ*.
§ *Philem.* 12, 17. ‖ 1 Sam. xviii. 4.

Prerogative of a Divine Perſon!) with the Robe of his Righteouſneſs, and with the Garment of his Salvation. He has conſigned over to Us all the Merit of his holy Life and propitiatory Death.

CHRIST ſtands related to his People, not as a Friend only, but as a *Parent.* He is called by a Prophet, THE EVERLASTING FATHER*; and We are ſaid, by an Apoſtle, to be *his Children* †.—Children look upon themſelves, as intereſted in the Wealth of their Parents. They expect, and not without reaſonable Ground, to reap Benefit from it, while the Parents live; and to become Poſſeſſors of it, when they die. Accordingly the Father ſays in the Goſpel; *Son, all that I have is thine* ‡.——Since the high and holy IMMANUEL vouchſafes to be our FATHER, can we ſuppoſe Him leſs generous than an earthly Parent? Or can We imagine that *his* Children ſhall have leſs to hope, than the Heirs of an earthly Progenitor? May we not, ought We not to regard all his communicable Goods, all the Benefits reſulting from his meritorious Sufferings and perfect Obedience, as our Portion?——Eſpecially, ſince He is the *Teſtator* ‖ alſo; has bequeathed them to Us by Will; and, having ſubmitted to Death, they become legally ours.

I am the VINE, ſays our LORD, *Ye are the Branches* §. They who believe, are ingrafted into *CHRIST.*——Take notice of a Cyon. What are the Conſequences of its *Ingrafture?* It is embodied with the Subſtance of the Tree, and partakes of its Fatneſs. The Sap, imbibed by the Root, circulates into it; gives it vegetable Life; fills it with Buds, decks it with Bloſſoms, and loads it with Fruit.—— If then we are one with *CHRIST*, as much as the Branch is one with the Stock, it muſt follow, even upon the Principles of common Experience, that his *Wiſdom* is ours, to enlighten Us; his *Righteouſneſs* is ours, to juſtify Us; his *Spirit* is ours, to ſanctify Us;

* Iſai. vi. 9. † Heb. ii. 13. ‡ Luke xv. 31.
‖ Heb. ix. 17. § John xv. 5.

his *Redemption* is ours, to make Us completely and eternally happy.

CHRIST is united to his People by a Tie, closer and dearer than the parental. They are not only his Children, but his *Spouse*. He is often called their Bridegroom, and is not ashamed to avow the tender Engagement: *I will betroth Thee to Me for ever. Yea, I will betroth Thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Judgment, and in Loving-kindness, and in Mercies. I will even betroth Thee unto Me in Faithfulness* *. The condescending GOD multiplies, diversifies, accumulates his Words. And all this, with admirable Propriety, as well as surpassing Goodness. The Honour is so *high*, and the Favour so *great*, We should hardly know how to believe it, and hardly venture to apply it. Lest therefore by a single Expression, it should not be sufficiently established, it stands ratified by repeated Asseverations, and with all the Energy of Language. So that, be the Grace ever so astonishing, We are assured, the Fact is equally certain; He that is *our* MAKER, is also *our* HUSBAND †.

Let Us consider what follows, upon such an Union. We may take for an Example, the Case of *Boaz* and *Ruth*. Soon as their Nuptials were solemnized, she that was poor, became rich: from a Gleaner in the Field, she commenced *Mistress* of the Harvest; and, from abiding by the Maidens, had a Seat at the Master's Table.—And if we are united to *CHRIST* by a Marriage Contract, the same Effects will take place. We that were poor, are rich in Him. We, who had Nothing, possess all Things in *CHRIST*. We that dwell in Dust, are made *to sit together* with our Divine HUSBAND in heavenly Places ‡.

If you choose some modern Exemplification, what can be more pertinent, than the remarkable Instance of your Neighbour *Arietta*? She was lately left a Widow, by the dissolute and extravagant *Bellario*. Her Circumstances miserably embarrassed, and the little Estate deeply mortgaged. Her Friends looked shy,

* Hos. ii. 19, 20. † Isai. liv. 5. ‡ Eph. ii. 6.

ſhy, and her Creditors became clamorous. Scarce a Day paſſed, but it made ſome new Diſcovery of Debts, contracted by the Deceaſed. So that the Affairs of the Survivor appeared with a more melancholy Aſpect, and in a leſs retrievable Condition.—But, having won, firſt, the Compaſſion, then the Affection, of the wealthy and illuſtrious *Philander*; how happily is the Face of Things altered! All her *Debts* devolve upon Him, and all his *Dignity* is derived to her *. He ſtands reſponſible, for whatever She *owes*; and She is a Sharer, in whatever He *poſſeſſes*. Though little leſs than ruined by her late Huſband, She is more than reſtored by her preſent; and has Reaſon to rejoice in his Affluence, and to Glory in his Honours.—Have not We alſo Reaſon to rejoice in our heavenly BRIDEGROOM? Since a far more glorious Exchange ſubſiſts betwe n Him and his myſtical Spouſe. He has borne the *Curſe*, that We may inherit the *Bleſſing*. *Sin* was charged on Him, that *Righteouſneſs* might be imputed to Us. In a Word; He has ſuſtained all our Miſeries, that He might impart to Us all his Benefits.—Has the Law any Demand †? It muſt go to Him for Satisfaction. Have We any Wants? We may look to Him for a Supply. To HIM, *Theron*, *in whom it has pleaſed the FATHER, that all Fulneſs ſhould dwell* ‡.

If any thing can expreſs an Union, more intimate and inſeparable than the conjugal, it is that of the Members with the *Head*. And this Image is uſed by the HOLY GHOST, to ſhadow forth the Connection between *CHRIST* and the Faithful. He is the *Head over all Things*, with reſpect to Rule and Supremacy; but a Head of Union and influence, with

* *Ubi Tu Caius, ibi Ego Caia* was the *Roman* Maxim. Agreeably to this Rule, which has obtained among all civilized Nations, the Scripture calls *the Church* by the Name of her divine *Huſband*. Compare *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6, with *Jer* xxxiii. 15, 16.

† The Demands of the Law are—Perfect Obedience; *Thou ſhalt love the LORD thy GOD with* all *thy Heart*.—To which, in caſe of Diſobedience, is ſuperadded condign Puniſhment; Curſed *is He that continueth not in all Things*.

‡ Col. i. 19.

reſpect *to the Church* *.—The Head and the Members conſtitute one natural Body; *CHRIST* and his Church compoſe one myſtical Body. What Kindneſs is done, what Injury is offered to the Members, the Head regards them as done to itſelf. Accordingly, *CHRIST* ſays to the outrageous *Saul* who made Havock of the Church; *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou ME* †? He declares, concerning theſe indigent *Chriſtians*, to whoſe Neceſſities We adminiſter Relief; *Inaſmuch as Ye have done it unto them, Ye have done it unto ME* ‡.—The Animal Spirits formed in the Head, are formed for the Benefit of the whole Body, and deſigned for the Uſe of all the Members. So the Righteouſneſs wrought by *JESUS CHRIST*, is wrought out for his whole myſtical Body, and intended for the Advantage of all his People; to be the Cauſe of their Juſtification, and the Purchaſe of their Salvation.

Being then ſo nearly related, ſo cloſely united to the bleſſed *JESUS*, it is no Wonder, that Believers are now loved with the ſame fatherly Love, and will hereafter be Partakers of the ſame heavenly Glory.—What might We not expect from the Divine REDEEMER, if He vouchſafed to acknowledge but *one* of theſe endearing Names? Since he has engaged Himſelf to Us by *all* the Ties of Affinity and Affection; may We not promiſe Ourſelves, and with the Aſſurance of Hope, every good Thing; *Even all the Fulneſs of GOD* ‖ our Saviour?—Does not each of theſe tender Relations, ſubſiſting between *CHRIST*, and his Saints, imply an intire Property in one another, and a mutual Participation of all that belongs to either?—*My beloved is mine, and I am his*—I dare not ſay, is the *Poeſy* of the myſtical Ring—but it is the undoubted *Effect* of this divine Union.

How pleaſing, yet how amazing the Thought! Shall We, who ſay to Corruption, *Thou art my Father*; and to the Worm, *Thou art my Mother and my Siſter* §; ſhall *We* be permitted to ſay, concerning the HEAD of

* Eph. i. 22. † Acts ix. 4. ‡ Matt. xxv. 40.
‖ Eph. iii. 19. § Job, xvii. 14.

of all Principality and Power, *We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bone* * ?—What a Mercy might We esteem it, not to be confounded before a MAJESTY so exalted and sublime! What a Favour, to obtain the least propitious Regard from the KING immortal and invisible! What an Honour, to be admitted into his Family, and numbered among the Meanest of his Servants!—But to be his *adopted* Children; to be his *espoused* Bride; to be the *Members* of his sacred Body—To have HIM for our everlasting *Father*, HIM for the *Bridegroom* of our souls, HIM for our heavenly *Head*; who is the MAKER of all Worlds, and the SOVEREIGN of all Creatures! What Words can duly celebrate, what Heart can sufficiently admire, the Condescension and the Love of our adorable *JESUS*? Or who can justly question the Fruits of such a Fellowship and the Consequences of such an Union? Question them! No, the Fruits are infallibly sure, as the Privilege is inexpressibly great.

Let me once again introduce a great and venerable Witness of both these Truths. "*Laban* spake high, "when He said; *These Children are mine, and all these* "*Things thou seest are mine.* But how high and glori- "ous is that, which may be said of a justified Person! "All thou hearest of *CHRIST* is thine; his Life "is thine, his Death is thine, his Obedience, Merit, "Spirit, all thine †"—Rich and important Words! Than which nothing can give Us a juster or fuller Explanation of the Apostle's Assertion, *We are Partakers of CHRIST* ‡.

When some foreign Ladies, of the first Quality, paid a Visit to *Leonidas*'s Queen; the Talk turned upon the rich Clothes, their costly Jewels, and splendid Equipage. After they had severally displayed each her own Grandeur, they inquired after her Majesty's Finery. What *She* had to distinguish Her from the

* Eph. v. 30.
† See *Dr. Lightfoot*'s Works, Vol. II. p. 1077.
‡ Heb. iii. 14.

Vulgar?—She replied, *My illuſtrious Huſband**. What elſe? *My illuſtrious Huſband.*—And as often as They repeated the ſame Queſtion, She returned the ſame Anſwer,—Could this Queen ſpeak in ſuch admiring, rejoicing, ſelf-gratulating Terms of her royal Conſort? And ſhall not vile Sinners look upon their REDEEMER—that all-glorious, yet all-condeſcending Bridegroom; who is full of Grace and Truth, full of Merit and Righteouſneſs—ſhall not they *much more* look upon HIM as their Honour and their Joy; the Object of their Dependence, and the Cauſe of their Boaſting?

I ſhould find it difficult to refrain from the farther Proſecution of ſo engaging a Topic, did I not propoſe to wait upon my *Theron* very ſpeedily. Then I ſhall have an Opportunity of pouring into his Boſom all the Fulneſs of my Heart, with regard to this delightful ſubject.—In the mean time, let me exhort my dear Friend to be of good Comfort. *Heavineſs may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning* †. This Sorrow of which You complain, may be the ſeed of ſpiritual and eternal Conſolation.

While I am writing, there appears full in my View, one of the fineſt *Rainbows*, I ever beheld. *It compaſſeth the Heaven with a glorious Circle*; ſo glorious, that it is no Diſparagement of the Almighty CREATOR, to ſay, *the Hands of the MOST HIGH have bended it* ‡.—On what Foundation, would I aſk, is that ſtately and beautiful Arch raiſed? From what Source, do all its radiant and lovely Colours ſpring? It is raiſed on a *gloomy* Aſſemblage of Vapours; and all its rich Tinctures ſpring from a *lowering* Cloud.—Thus does the bleſſed GOD, on a Conviction of Guilt and a Senſe of Ruin, ſpread Faith, paint Holineſs, and diffuſe Gladneſs. May all theſe, ere long, ariſe

* The amiable and heroic *Panthea* expreſſes Herſelf in much the ſame Manner, concerning her gallant Huſband *Abradates*; Συ γαρ εμοιγε μεγιςος κοσμος εση. ZENOPH. Cyropæd. Lib. VI.

† Pſalm xxx. 5. ‡ Ecclus. xliii. 12.

arise in my *Theron*'s Breast! And each be—*bright* as that resplendent Bow—*lasting*, as the Sun that creates it!

In the mean time, it is the ardent Wish of my Soul, and shall be my frequent Prayer to GOD, *That both our Hearts may be comforted, being knit together in Love, unto all Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding* *, in this great Mystery of Godliness—What Vigour of Expression, what Exuberance of Ideas, and, above all, what distinguished Privileges are Here!——*Assurance*,—*Full* Assurance——*Riches* of the full Assurance——*All* Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding—in reference to our Union with *CHRIST*, and its unutterably precious Effects!—Can the Orator express more? Can the Sinner desire more? Can the Saint, I had almost said, can the Archangel enjoy more? May this be the Portion of my dear *Theron*, and of

His ever faithful

ASPASIO.

* Col. ii. 2.

DIALOGUE XV.

ASPASIO had taken Leave of his Friend *Camillus*, and was come to revisit *Theron*; whose Thoughts seemed to be in a State of much Fluctuation, and no small Anxiety. Hoping, that some proper Conversation on the *Grace* and *Privileges* of the everlasting Gospel, might compose and comfort his Mind. Might, while his Heart was softened by humbling Convictions, fix the Stamp of genuine Christianity; and deliver his whole Soul into the Mould * of evangelical Religion.

When Sorrow wounds the Breast, as Ploughs the Glebe,
And Hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning Show'r,
Her seed celestial then *glad Wisdom sows:*
Her golden Harvests triumph in the Soil †.

He arrived pretty late in the Evening; and, being somewhat weary with the Journey, soon withdrew to his

* *Deliver into the Mould.* — This is the literal Translation, and exact Sense of St. *Paul*'s Phrase; Εις ον παρεδοθητε τυπον διδαχης, Rom. vi. 17.—Which, as it contains a *beautiful Allusion*, conveys also a very *instructive Admonition*. Intimating, that our Minds, all pliant and ductile, should be conformed to the refined Precepts of the Gospel, as liquid Metals take the Figure of some elegant Mould into which they are cast.

† Night-Thoughts.

his Repoſe.—The next Morning, as *Theron* walked abroad, to taſte the cool Delights of the Dawn; He was agreeably ſurprized, by meeting *Aſpaſio*.

Ther. So ſoon awake, my worthy Friend! And after ſo much Fatigue on the preceding Day!—I had not the leaſt Expectation of your Company, 'till Breakfaſt. Then indeed I promiſed myſelf a double Regale—The Refreſhments exhibited on the Table; and thoſe *wholeſome Words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST* *, which, more precious than Manna, drop——

Aſp. How, *Theron!*—Have you alſo learnt thoſe ſoothing Arts, which poliſh the ſpeech, to deprave our Sentiments? Could I have ſuſpected the inchanting Wiles of *Flattery*, from my ſincere, my tried, my boſom Friend?

Ther. Your Friend is ſtill ſincere, and his Words are very remote from Flattery.—How welcome to the wind-bound *Mariner*, weary with Expectation, and ſick with Diſappointments, is the Viſit of a propitious Gale! How welcome to the *Fields*, parched with Drought, and gaſping for Moiſture, are copious Showers of Rain! How acceptable to the *Iſraelites*, traveling through the inhoſpitable Deſart, and pining away for want of the Fruits of the Earth, was the miraculous Supply of heavenly Bread!—Yet, neither propitious Gales to the wind-bound Mariner, nor copious Showers to the thirſty Soil, nor heavenly Bread to the famiſhed *Iſraelites*, could be more welcome, than your late Converſation, and later Correſpondence, to my anxious Soul.

Aſp. Why I thought you looked upon *my* Notions as chimerical. Is *Theron* alſo become credulous? Like one of Us weak-headed Believers!—Has *He* quitted the Strong-holds of Reaſon? Is *He* vanquiſhed by the Sling-ſtone of Faith? Or can *He* ſubmit to this ſtrange Method of Salvation, by embracing the Righteouſneſs, and relying on the Obedience of Another.

* 1 Tim. vi. 3.

Ther. I find, my Reason was a feeble Guide; or I myself not faithful to its genuine Dictates. I was blinded with Prejudice. I was intoxicated with Pride. A vain Conceit of my moral Powers betrayed me, as I fear it has betrayed many, into a Contempt of the evangelical Righteousness.—I held, what I thought an Honour to human Nature. I now retract my Opinion. I now perceive, that, as my *natural Light* could not discover the Way, neither can my *personal Obedience* put me in possession, of Life and Salvation. My true Glory, and real Happiness, I would henceforth derive from the blessed *JESUS*.—No more Banter, *Aspasio*:—Have done.—I am serious, and very much in earnest. So much in earnest, that if all my Acquaintance of the *Pharisaical* Turn, or if all my Brothers of the Smile, should rally me on the Subject; I would frankly acknowledge my Error, and as freely sign my Recantation.

Asp My dear *Theron*. I applaud your Resolution. You have no more Cause to be ashamed of such a Practice, than *Philip* had to be ashamed of the Imperfection in his Limbs. When, being observed to go lame, with a Wound received in Battle, he had this Consolation suggested by one of his Courtiers: "Never blush, my royal Sir, for a Defect, which puts "You in mind of your *Valour*, every Step You take." —To sacrifice our Prejudices, in the Search of Truth, is no less honourable, than to be marked with a Scar in the Defence of our Country.

I beg Pardon for my Pleasantry. Since you are so very serious, a gay Air was quite unseasonable— You cannot often complain, that I am guilty of this Fault. Nor can you easily imagine the Satisfaction I shall enjoy; if, either my Letters or my Discourse, have administered *any Advantage* to my Friend. I shall note it down, among the distinguished Blessings of my Life; and have an additional Obligation, to love the beneficent AUTHOR of all Good.

But, as I cannot be a Furtherer of your Happiness, without the greatest Delight; So I cannot be a Witness of your Solicitude, without a painful Regret.

You

You must therefore permit me to ask the Cause of that unusual *Vehemence*, which I observe in your Speech; and of that deep *Concern*, which I read in your Countenance.

Ther. I have been considering very attentively, What is the present State, and what is likely to be the *final* Condition of my Soul.

——————My Hopes and Fears
Start up alarm'd; and o'er Life's narrow Verge
Look down——on what? A fathomless Abyss,
A vast Eternity!

My *Sins*, at the same time, like an armed Host, are set in dreadful Array, and surround me on every Side.—*Justice*, like an injured and incensed Foe, unsheaths the Sword, and makes a loud Demand for Vengeance.—No Righteousness of *my own* presents itself, to which I may fly for Refuge.——The Method of Salvation, in which I formerly confided, is a Bridge *broken down*; and leaves me, without any Possibility of Escape, abandoned to the approaching Enemy.

To a Person in such deplorable Circumstances, how reviving, how delightful, is the very Thought of being interested in the great REDEEMER's Righteousness!—I don't wonder now at a Saying of *Luther's*; which I have sometimes exploded, as strangely extravagant: "That, upon the Discovery of this "glorious Righteousness, the Gates of Paradise seemed to fly open before Him, and the Dawn of Heaven was all in view."

Talking in this manner, they came to an elevated *Terrace*. Which, about an Hour before, had been shaved by the Scythe, and emitted all the Freshness of new-mown Herbage.—On one Side, a fine *Champaign Country* stretched its wide Dimensions.—On the other, a *Flower Garden* exhibited the last Ornaments of the Year.—Here, You might still see the tufted Vermilion, and the full-blown Ivory, glittering through Spangles of liquid Crystal—There, You might trace the Footsteps of the early Cattle, by many a recent

Print

Print on the dewy Lawn.—On the Walls and Eſpaliers, Autumn had ſpread her Stores; and was beginning to beautify their Rinds with many a *ruddy Streak*, or to breathe over their gloſſy Skins her delicate and *inimitable Bloom*.

Aſp. See, ſaid *Aſpaſio*, the Wiſdom and Benignity, which, in amiable and inſeparable Conjunction, diſplay themſelves through the whole Oeconomy of the Univerſe! *GOD has made every Thing beautiful in his Time**; every Thing ſerviceable in its Place. A little while ago, the flowery Meads delighted our Eyes, and the melodious Birds charmed our Ears; now, the taſteful Fruits are preparing their Dainties; and preſenting Us with a Collation, to regale our Palate.—The whole Earth, and all the Seaſons, are rich with our CREATOR's Goodneſs. Yea, the whole Earth, and all that repleniſhes it, all that ſurrounds it, are full of his Preſence. HE it is, who

Warms in the Sun, refreſhes in the Breeze,
Glows in the Stars, and bloſſoms in the Trees;
Lives through all Life, extends through all Extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unſpent †.

An habitual Belief of this Truth, gives Nature her *loveliеſt* Aſpect, and lends her the moſt conſummate Power to pleaſe. The Breath of Violets, and the Bluſh of Roſes; the Muſic of the Woods, and the Meanders of the Stream; the aſpiring Hill, the extended Plain, and all the Decorations of the Landſchape; *then* appear in their higheſt Attractives; *then* touch the Soul with the moſt refined Satisfaction; when GOD is ſeen—when GOD is heard—and GOD enjoyed in all — — — — — — — — — — — — — Is *Theron* loſt in Thought, and deprived of Speech? Is He alone ſilent, while all Things ſpeak their MAKER's Praiſe?—Does Faith throw a Shade over the Works of Creation? Does it not heighten their Beauties, and inliven their Graces?——The *religious* is the only *true* Philoſopher; and the Pleaſures of

* Eccleſ. iii. 11. † POPE's *ib. Eſſ.*

of Imagination never acquire their proper Reliſh, till they are ripened by the Exerciſe of Devotion. With this View then, ſince my Friend forbears, let *me* attempt to ſpeak: not to increaſe his Knowledge, but to cheriſh Faith, and cultivate Devotion in Us both.

The ſpacious Canopy * over our Heads, is painted with Blue; and the ample Carpet under our Feet, is tinged with Green. Theſe Colours, by their *ſoft* and *chearing* Qualities, yield a perpetual Refreſhment to the Eye †. Whereas, had the Face of Nature gliſtered with White, or glowed with Scarlet; ſuch ardent and dazling Hues would, inſtead of exhilarating, have fatigued the Sight.—Beſides; as the ſeveral brighter Colours are interſperſed, and form the *Pictures* in this magnificent Piece; the Green and the Blue conſtitute an admirable *Ground*, which ſhews them all, in their higheſt Luſtre, and to the utmoſt Advantage ‡.

Had the *Air* been conſiderably *groſſer*, it would have dimmed the Rays of the Sun, and darkened the chearful Day. Our Lungs had been clogged in their vital Functions: Men had been ſuffocated, without the ſtrangling Nooſe; or drowned, without the overwhelming Flood.—Was it ſeveral degrees more *ſubtle*,

* What *Aſpaſio* calls the Canopy, *Iſaiah* deſcribes by רָקִ֔ע Which We tranſlate *as a Curtain*; but the exact Signification is, *Sicut tenue, vel tenuiſſimum quid*; Like ſome finely attenuated Expanſe. Not like the Curtains or the Covering of the Tabernacle, which were Goats Hair and Badgers Skins, ſhaggy and coarſe. But like ſome *very fine* Membrane, ſmooth and elegant, nicely, poliſhed and inimitably delicate. Than which Compariſon nothing can more perfectly correſpond with the Aſpect of the Sky. *Iſai.* xl. 22.

† ——————————— *Gay* Green,
Thou ſmiling Nature's univerſal Robe!
United Light and Shade! Where the Sight dwells,
With growing Strength, and ever-new Delight.
THOMSON's *Spring.*

‡ If the Reader has patience to go through the following Eſſay. He will find it, in the Iſſue, not altogether foreign to the main Subject.—If he pleaſes to conſider it, as a kind of *practical Comment*, on that lovely Celebration of providential Goodneſs, *His tender Mercies are over all his Works*—This may poſſibly alleviate the Toil of peruſing, and reconcile Him to the Length of the Deſcant.

tle, Birds would not be able to wing their Way through the Firmament; nor could the Clouds be ſuſtained, in ſo attenuated an Atmoſphere. It would elude the Organs of Reſpiration: We ſhould gaſp for Breath, with as much Difficulty; and with as little Succeſs, as Fiſhes out of their native Element.

The *Ground* alſo is wrought into the moſt proper Temperature. Was it of a *firmer* conſiſtence, it would be impenetrable to the Plough, and unmanageable by the Spade.—Was it of a *laxer* Compoſition, it would be incapable of ſupporting its own Furniture. The light Mold would be ſwept away by whirling Winds; or the oozy Glebe ſoaked into Sloughs by the deſcending Rains ——Becauſe, every Situation ſuits not every Plant; but that which is a Nurſe to one, often proves a Step mother to others; therefore, the Qualities of the Earth are ſo abundantly diverſified, as properly to accommodate every Species of Vegetation. We have a Variety of intermediate Soils, from the *looſe* disjoined Sand, to the *ſtiff* coheſive Clay: from the rough Projections of the *craggy* Cliff, to the ſoftly ſwelling Bed of the *ſmooth* Parterre.

The *Sea* carries equal Evidences of a moſt wiſe and gracious Ordination—Was it *larger*, We ſhould want Land for the Purpoſes of Paſturage, and the Operations of Huſbandry. We ſhould be deſtitute of ſufficient Room for Mines and Foreſts; our ſubterranean Warehouſes, and our aerial Timber-Yards — Was it *ſmaller*, it would not be capable of recruiting the Sky, with a proper Quantity of vaporous Exhalations; nor of ſupplying the Earth with the neceſſary Quota of fructifying Showers.

Do we not diſcern very apparent Strokes of Skill, and the moſt pregnant Proofs of Goodneſs, in each individual Object? In the various *Tenants* of the Globe, and the ſeveral *Appurtenances* of this great Dwelling?—It is needleſs to expatiate upon the more eminent and conſpicuous Beauties; all that *ſhines* in the Heavens, and all that *ſmiles* on the Earth. Theſe ſpeak to every Ear, theſe ſhew to every Eye, the adorable

adorable Munificence of their MAKER.——It is needleſs to launch into the Praiſes of the Valleys, delicately cloathed with Herbage; or of the Fields, richly repleniſhed with Corn. Even the *ragged* Rocks, which frown over the Flood; the *cavern* Quarries, which yawn amidſt the Land; together with the Mountains, thoſe *ſhapeleſs* and *enormous* Protuberances, which ſeem to load the Ground, and incumber the Skies; even theſe contribute their Share, to increaſe the general Pleaſure, and augment the general Uſefulneſs. They variegate the Proſpect; raiſe an agreeable Horror in the Beholder; and inſpire his Breaſt with a religious Awe. They add new Charms to the wide Level of our Plains; and ſhelter, like a Screen, the warm Lap of our Vales.

We are delighted with the ſolemn Gloom, and magnificent Aſpect, of the Foreſt. One, who ſaw the Cedars of *Lebanon*, was tranſported with Admiration, at their ample Trunks, and towering Heads; their diffuſive Spread, and verdant Grandeur Compared with which, the ſtately Elm is but a Reed; and the branching Oak, a meer Shrub——Was our Sight qualified for the Search, We ſhould diſcover a *Symmetry* and a *Dignity*, altogether as perfect, and far more wonderful, in thoſe Groves of *Moſs* *, which adhere to the rude Stone. We ſhould contemplate, with greater Surprize, if not with greater Rapture, thoſe diminutive Plantations; which ſtrike their haſty Roots

* See, for a Proof of this Remark, the Explanation of the *tenth Plate*, in that very curious, very entertaining, and no leſs inſtructive piece, intitled *Micrographia Reſtaurata*.—Where our Author compares the Size of this little Vegetable, with the dimenſions of thoſe vaſt Trees, which grow in the vigorous Climates of *Guinea* and *Brazil* The Trunks of which are, according to the Report of Travellers, twenty Feet in Diameter. Whereas, the Body of this minute Plant, meaſures no more than the ſixtieth Part of an Inch. So that, upon a Calculation, the Thickneſs of the former exceeds that of the latter, 2,985,984 Millions of Times.—So prodigiouſly various are the Works of the CREATOR.

Roots in the mouldy Confection, or wave their curious Umbrage over the perifhed Pickle.*

Who is not charmed with the Vine, and its generous warming Juices? With the Melon, and its delicious cooling Pulp? Yet, were all our Trees to produce Fruits of fuch exalted Qualities, or of fuch an agreeable Reliſh, what would become of the *Birds!* How fmall a Scantling of fuch choice Delicacies, would voracious Man reſign to their Enjoyment?— That Proviſion may be made for the meaneſt *Vagrant* of the Air, as well as for the moſt renowned Sovereign of a Nation; there is, in all Places a large Growth of Shrubs, covered annually with a Harveſt of coarſe and hardy Berries. So *coarſe* in their Taſte, that they are unworthy of the Acceptance, of Man: ſo *hardy* in their Make, that they endure the extremeſt Severities of the Weather; and furniſh the feathered Tribe with a ſtanding Repaſt, amidſt all the Deſolations of Winter.

The Fir, with her ſilver Bark, and ſhapely Cone; the Beech †, with her quivering Leaves and embowering Shade; are ſtately Decorations of our rural Seats. But, if there were no entangling *Thickets*, no prickly *Thorns*, where would the Farmer procure Fences, ſo cloſely wattled, or ſo ſtrongly armed‡? How

* That whitiſh kind of Down, which ſhaggs the putrefying Pickle; which incruſts the Surface of ſome corrupted Liquors; and conſtitutes what we call *Mouldineſs*; is really a Cluſter of little Plants. Each has a Root and a ſtalk: Each ſpreads its Branches, and produces Seed in Abundance.

Radiceſque ſuas habet, exilemque Coronam,
Frondeſque, Fructumque gerit, velut ardua Quercus.

† The *Fir*, the *Beech*, and ſuch like Trees, are called in *Hebrew*, נהללים Iſai. vii. 19. Which Word is rendered, but I think very improperly, *Buſhes*. It rather ſignifies the *grand* and moſt *admired* Plants. It is intended as a Contraſt to the coarſe and deſpicable Thorns, mentioned in the preceding Clauſe. And both taken together expreſs all ſorts of Trees, from the towering Cedar to the groveling Shrub.

‡ Something to this Purpoſe is hinted in the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, by יראת שמיר ושות *Terriculamentum Sentium & Veprium:* The

How could He guard the Scene of his Labours, or ſecure his vegetable Wealth, from the Flocks and the Herds? Thoſe roving Plunderers, which accede to no Treaty, but that of *forcible* Reſtraint; ſubmit to no Laws, but thoſe of the *coercive* Kind.

Moſt People are fond of the Purſlane's fleſhy Leaves, and the ramified Fatneſs of the Brocoli: the Potato's mealy Orbs, and the Lentile's ſucculent Pods. We ſpare no Toil, We grudge no Expence, to have them flouriſh in our Gardens, and ſerved up at our Tables.—But there are innumerable Herbs, which paſs under the contemptible Character of *Weeds*; and yet are altogether as deſirable to many Claſſes of Creatures, as theſe culinary Gifts to Mankind. Who ſhall be at the Pains to Plant, to water, to cultivate, ſuch deſpicable Productions? Man would rather *extirpate*, than *propagate*, theſe Incumbrances of his Acres. Therefore Providence vouchſafes to be their Gardener Providence has wrought off their Seeds into ſuch a Lightneſs of Subſtance, that they are carried abroad with the Undulations of the Air. Or, if too heavy to be waſted by the Breeze, they are faſtened to Wings of Down, which facilitate their Flight. Or elſe, are incloſed in a ſpringy Caſe; which, forcibly burſting, ſhoots and ſpreads them on every Side.—By ſome ſuch Means, the reproducing Principle is diſſeminated; the univerſal Granary is filled; and the univerſal Board furniſhed. The buzzing Inſect and the creeping Worm, have each his *Bill of Fare.*

The Terror of Thorns and Briars. Meaning thoſe ſharp and ragged Mounds, with which Vineyards, Corn-fields, and other cultivated Spots, were uſually incloſed. Which *deterred* the moſt adventurous Cattle from forcing, or attempting to force a paſſage.—The Words are ſomewhat obſcure, and have been greatly miſunderſtood. But, thus interpreted, they afford an eaſy Senſe, and perfectly coincide with the Context. Implying, "That "Places, formerly fenced about with Abundance of Care, ſhould "lie open, and expoſed to every wandering Foot. That Til-"lage ſhould be diſcontinued; and the whole Country degene-"rate into a confuſed, diſorderly Waſte; without either the "Diſtributions of Property, or the Improvements of Induſtry." *Iſai.* vii. 25. Vid. VITRING. *in loc.*

Fare. Each enjoys a never-failing Treat, equivalent to our fineſt Veniſon, or to the "Fat of Kidneys of "Wheat. *"

As the Seeds of ſome Plants are moſt artfully ſcattered abroad, when ripe; the Seeds of others are moſt carefully *guarded*, till they come to Maturity; and by both Contrivances, every Species is not barely preſerved, but in a manner eternized.—Some are lodged in the Center of a large *Pulp*; which is, at once, their Defence, and their Nouriſhment. This we find exemplified in the taſteful Apple, and the juicy Pear.—Some, beſides the ſurrounding Pulp, are incloſed in a thick *Shell*, hard and impenetrable as Stone. We cannot pluck and eat one of thoſe downy Peaches, or incrimſoned Nectarines, which ſo beautifully emboſs the Wall, without finding a Proof of this Precaution—Caſt your Eye upon the Walnuts, which ſtud the Branches of that ſpreading Tree. Before theſe are gathered, the Increaſe of the Cold, and the Emptineſs of the Gardens will ſharpen the Appetite of the Birds. To ſecure the fine Kernel from the depredations of their buſy aſſailing Bills, it is fortified with a ſtrong *Incloſure* of Wood, and with the Addition of a diſguſtful bitter *Rind*.

If *Graſs* was as ſcarce as the *Guernſey-Lily*; or as difficultly raiſed as the delicate Tuberoſe; how certainly, and how ſpeedily, muſt many Millions of Quadrupeds periſh with Famine! Since all the Cattle owe their chief Subſiſtance to this Vegetable, by a ſingular Beneficence in the Divine Oeconomy, *it waiteth*

* *The Fat of Kidneys of Wheat*, Deut. xxxii. 14. A Sentence, rich with Elegance! Such as would have ſhone in *Pindar*, or been admired by *Longinus*. Yet, I believe, its principal Beauty conſiſts, in an Alluſion to a remarkable *Jewiſh* Rite. In every Sacrifice, the Fat of the Kidneys, was, as the moſt delicious Part of the Victim, ſet a part for GOD, and conſumed on his Altar. Here, even the common People were treated like the DEITY. They lay under no Reſtraint, either from the divine Prohibition, or the Scarcity of the Grain. But were copiouſly ſupplied, and freely regaled themſelves with the *choiceſt fineſt* Part of this firſt and beſt of Vegetables.

waiteth not, like the Corn field and the Garden-bed, *for* the annual Labours of *Man* *. When once ſown, though ever ſo frequently cropped, it revives with the returning Seaſon, and flouriſhes in a kind of perennial Verdure It covers our Meadows; diffuſes itſelf over the Plains; ſprings up in every Glade of the Foreſt; and ſpreads a Side-board in the moſt ſequeſtered Nook.

Since the Nutriment of Vegetables themſelves, lies hid under the Soil, or floats up and down in the Air: *beneath*, they plunge their Roots † into the Ground, and diſperſe every Way their fibrous Suckers, to explore the latent, and attract the proper Nouriſhment: *above*, they expand a Multitude of Leaves ‡; which, like ſo many open Mouths, catch the Rains as they fall; imbibe the Dews as they diſtil; and tranſmit them, through their nice Orifices to the Heart of the Plant, or the Lobes of the Fruit.

I have touched upon the *inſenſible* Creation; and pointed out the Care of a Condeſcending Providence, exerciſed over theſe loweſt Formations of Nature.—— The *animal* World, *Theron*, falls to your Share. It is yours to deſcant upon thoſe higher Orders of Exiſtence; and ſhew Us the Goodneſs of GOD, extending its indulgent Regards to them and their Intereſts; as tenderly, as officiouſly, as a Hen ſpreadeth her Wings † over her infant Brood.

Ther. The ſubject is in good Hands. Let *Part the ſecond* be of the ſame Strain with *Part the firſt*, and there will be no Occaſion to wiſh for a new Speaker. As to myſelf I have very little Inclination to talk. But I have an Ear open and attentive to your Diſcourſe.

Aſp, You put me in mind of the Philoſopher, who preſumed to read a Lecture on the Art of War, in the

* Mic. v. 7.

† *Job* moſt beautifully alludes to theſe two Sources of vegetable Fertility; *My Root was ſpread out by the Waters, and the Dew lay all Night upon my Branch.* Job. xxix. 19.

‡ This ſeems to be the Image uſed by the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. cxlv. 9. And a moſt amiable Image, as well as a moſt picturesque Repreſentation, it is.

the Preſence of *Hannibal*. But his Impertitence was *voluntary*, mine is *conſtrained*.—Since you injoin me this Office, let Us paſs from the vegetable, to the animal World. Here, We ſhall find no Tribe, no Individual neglected The ſuperior Claſſes want no Demonſtration of their excellent Accompliſhments. At the firſt Glimpſe, they challenge our Approbation; they command our Applauſe. Even the *more ignoble* Forms of animated Exiſtence, are moſt wiſely circumſtanced, and moſt liberally accommodated.

They all generate in that particular Seaſon, which is ſure to ſupply them with a Stock of Proviſion, ſufficient both for themſelves, and their increaſing Families.—The Sheep yean, when there is a Profuſion of *nutrimental Herbage* on the Soil, to fill their Udders, and create Milk for their Lambs:——The Birds lay their Eggs, and hatch their Young, when *Myriads* of new-born, tender inſects, ſwarm on every Side. So that the Caterer, whether it be the male or female Parent, needs only to alight on the Ground, or make a little Excurſion into the Air; and they find a Feaſt ready dreſt, and all at free Coſt, for the clamant Mouths at home.

Their Love to their offspring, while they continue in a helpleſs State, is *invincibly* ſtrong. Whereas, the very Moment they are able to ſhift for themſelves; when the parental Affection would be attended with much Solicitude, and productive of no Advantage; it *vaniſhes*, as though it had never been.——The Hen which marches at the Head of her little Brood, would fly in the Eyes of a Maſtiff, or even encounter a Lion, in their Defence. Yet, within a few Weeks ſhe abandons her Chickens to the wide World, and not ſo much as knows them any more.

If the GOD of *Iſrael* inſpired *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* with *Wiſdom, and Underſtanding, and Knowledge in all manner of Workmanſhip* *: the GOD of Nature has inſtructed the wild and warbling Inhabitants of the Bough—The *Skill*, with which they erect their Houſes, and adjuſt their Apartments, is inimitable.

* Exod. xxxi. 3.

mitable. The *Caution*, with which they ſecrete their Abodes from the ſearching Eye, or intruding Foot, is admirable. No General, though fruitful in Expedients, could plan a more artful Concealment. No Architect, with his Rule and Line, could build ſo commodious a Lodgment.——Give the moſt celebrated Artificer the ſame Materials which theſe weak and unexperienced Creatures uſe. Let a *Jones* or a *De Moivre*, have only ſome rude Straws or ugly Sticks; a few Bits of Dirt, or ſcraps of Hair; a ſorry Lock of Wool, or a coarſe Sprig of Moſs; and what Works, fair with Delicacy, or fit for Service, could *they* produce?

We extol the Commander, who knows how to take Advantage of the Ground: who can make the Sun and Wind fight for Him, as well as his Troops; and, by every Circumſtance, embarraſſes the Forces of the Enemy, but expedites the Action, and advances the Succeſs of his own. Does not this Praiſe belong to our *feathery Leaders?* who pitch their Tent, or (if You pleaſe) fix their penſile Camp, on the dangerous Branches, that wave aloft in the Air, or dance over the Eddies of the Stream. By which judicious Diſpoſition, the vernal Gales rock their Cradle, and the murmuring Waters lull their Young: while both concur to terrify the Shepherd, and keep the School Boy at a trembling Diſtance.—Some hide their little Houſhold from View, amidſt the Shelter of intangled Furze. Others remove it from Reach, in the Center of a thorny Thicket. And, by one Stratagem or another, they are generally as *ſecure* and *unmoleſted*, in their feeble Habitations; as the Foxes, which intrench themſelves deep in the Earth; or as the Conies, which retire to the Rock for their * Citadel.

If the *Swan* has large ſweeping Wings, and a copious Stock of Feathers, to ſpread over her callow Brood; the *Wren* makes up by Contrivance, what is deficient in her Bulk.——Small as ſhe is, ſhe intends

* Prov. xxx. 26.

tends * to bring forth, and will be obliged to nurſe up, a very numerous Iſſue. Therefore with the correcteſt Judgment ſhe deſigns, and with indefatigable Aſſiduity finiſhes, a Neſt proper for her Purpoſe. It is a neat *Rotund*; lengthened into an *Oval*; bottomed and vaulted with a regular *Concave*. To preſerve it from Rain, it has ſeveral Coatings of Moſs: to defend it from Cold, it has but one Window, and only a ſingle Door: to render it both elegant and comfortable, it has *Carpets* and *Hangings* of the fineſt and ſofteſt Down—By the Help of this curious Manſion, our little Lady becomes the Mother of Multitudes. The vivifying Heat of her Body is, during the Time of Incubation, exceedingly augmented. Her Houſe is like an Oven, and greatly aſſiſts in hatching her Young. Which no ſooner burſt the Shell, than they find themſelves ſcreened from the Annoyance of the Weather; and moſt agreeably repoſed, amidſt the Ornaments of a Palace, and the Warmth of the Bagnio.

Perhaps, we have been accuſtomed to look upon the Inſects, as ſo many *rude* Scraps of Creation, and to rank them amongſt the *Refuſe* of Things. Whereas, if We examine them, without Prejudice, and with a little Attention, they will appear ſome of the moſt poliſhed Pieces of divine Workmanſhip.—Many of them are decked with a Profuſion of Finery. Their *Eyes* are an Aſſemblage † of Microſcopes; whoſe

* *Aſpaſio* has ventured to ſay, *She intends*—And one is almoſt tempted to think, from the Preparation which the little Creature makes, that She had really ſet down, and counted the Coſt, and concerted her Scheme. As though ſhe had deliberated with Herſelf—"I ſhall lay, not a Couple of Eggs, but "near a Score. From theſe I am to produce a Houſe full of "Young. But how ſhall I have Warmth (unleſs Art ſupply, "what Nature has denied) ſufficient to hatch the Embryos, or "cheriſh the Infants?"—The Truth, I believe, is; That, in all her ſeeming Foreſight, and circumſpect Behaviour, She acts, She knows not what. Only ſhe acts, what eternal Wiſdom knows to be neceſſary, and what all condeſcending Goodneſs prompts her to perform.

† The *common Fly*, for Inſtance; who is ſurrounded with a Multitude of Dangers, and has neither Strength to reſiſt her Enemies,

whose Mechanism is inconceivably nice, and finished in the highest Perfection. Their *Dress* has all the Variety and Lustre of Colours: it is set with an Arrangement of the most brilliant Gems, and bordered with Fringes richer far than the most costly Silks. Their *Wings* are the finest Expansions imaginable: Cambric is mere Canvass, and Lawn is coarse as Sack cloth, compared with those inimitable Webs. The *Cases*, which inclose their Wings, glitter with the most glossy Varnish; are scooped into ornamental Fluting; are studied with radiant Spots; or pinked with elegant Holes.—Not any among them but are equipped with Weapons, or endued with Dexterity, which qualify them to seize their Prey, or escape their Foe; to dispatch the Business of their respective Station, and enjoy the Pleasures of their particular Condition.

Now I am in a talking Humour, give me leave to celebrate the Endowments, and assert the Honours of my puny Clients. Yet, not so much to support *their* Credit, as to magnify their *all-gracious* CREATOR.—What? If the Elephant is distinguished by a huge *Probescis?* His meanest Relations of the reptile Line, are furnished with curious *Antennæ*; remarkable, if not for their enormous Magnitude, yet for their ready Flexibility, and acute Sensation. By which they explore their Way, even in the darkest Road: they discover and avoid, whatever might defile their neat Apparel, or endanger their tender Lives.

Every

mies, nor a Place of Retreat to secure Herself. For which Reason, She had need to be very vigilant, and always upon her Guard. Yet her Head is so fixed, that it is incapable of turning, in order to observe what passes, either behind or around her.—Providence therefore, surprisingly wise in its Contrivances, and equally bountiful in its Gifts, has furnished her, not barely with a *Retinue*, but with more than a *Legion* of Eyes. Insomuch, that a single Fly is supposed to be Mistress of no less than eight thousand. Every one of which is lined with a distinct optic Nerve.—By means of this costly and amazing Apparatus, the little Creature sees on every Side, with the utmost Ease and with instantaneous Speed; even without any Motion of the Eye, or any Flection of the Neck.

Every one admires that majeſtic Creature the *Horſe*; his graceful Head, and ample Cheſt; his arching Neck, and flowing Mane; his cleanly turned Limbs, and finely adjuſted Motions. With extraordinary Agility, He flings Himſelf over the Ditch; and with a rapid Career, pours Himſelf* through the Plain. With unwearied Application, He carries his Rider from one End of the Country to another; and with undaunted Bravery, ruſhes into the fierceſt Rage, and amidſt the thickeſt Havock of the Battle. ——Yet, the *Graſhopper* ſprings with a Bound altogether as briſk, if not more impetuous.——The *Ant*, in proportion to its Size, is equally nimble; equally ſtrong; and will climb Precipices, which the moſt courageous Courſer dares not attempt to ſcale. —If the *Snail* is ſlower in her Motions, She is under no neceſſity of treading back the Ground, which She has paſſed. Becauſe, her Houſe is a Part of her travelling Equipage: and whenever She departs, She is ſtill under her own Roof; where-ever She removes, is always at Home.

The *Eagle*, 'tis true, is privileged with Pinions, that out-ſtrip the Wind. Elevated on which, She looks down on all that ſoars; and ſees flying Clouds, and ſtraining Wings, far below. Her optic Nerve ſo ſtrong, that it meets and ſuſtains the dazzling Beams of Noon: her wide ſurveying Glance ſo keen, that from thoſe towering Heights, it diſcerns the ſmalleſt Fiſh, which ſculks at the Bottom of the River.—Yet, neither is that poor Outcaſt, the groveling and gloomy *Mole*, diſregarded by divine Providence. Becauſe ſhe is to dig a Cell in the Earth, and dwell, as it were, in a perpetual Dungeon, her Paws ſerve her for a Pick axe and Spade. Her Eye, or rather her viſual Speck, is ſunk deep into a Socket, that it may ſuffer no Injury from her rugged Situation: it requires but a very ſcanty Communication of Light, that

* *Pours Himſelf*—This is *Jeremiah*'s beautiful and expreſſive Phraſe, כסום שמף Chap. viii. 6. Which *Virgil* has been ambitious to imitate;

——— *Ruuntque effuſi Carcere.*

that she may have no Reason to complain of her darkling Abode. I called her subterranean Habitation a Dungeon; and some People, perhaps, may think it a Grave. But I revoke the Expression. It yields her all the Safety of a fortified *Castle*, and all the Delight of a decorated *Grot*.

Even the *Spider*, though abhorred by Mankind, is evidently the Care of all sustaining Heaven. She is to live upon Plunder; to support Herself, by trapaning the idle, insignificant, sauntering Fly. Suitably to such an Occupation, she possesses a Bag of glutinous Moisture. From this she spins a clammy *Thread*, and weaves it into a tenacious *Net*. Expert as any practised Sportsman, she always spreads it in the most opportune Places. Sensible that her Appearance would create Horror, and deter the Prey from approaching the Snare, when watching for Sport, she retires from Sight. But constantly keeps within Distance, so as to receive the very first Intelligence of what passes in the Toils; and be ready to launch, without a Moment's Delay, upon the struggling Captive. And what is very observable, when Winter chills the World, and no more insects ramble amidst the Air, foreseeing that her Labour would be vain, she discontinues her Work, and abandons her Stand.

I must by no means forget the little Monarchy, which inhabits the Hive. The *Bees* are to subsist, not as a lawless Banditti, but as a regular Community. 'Tis theirs, to earn a decent Livelihood by honest Industry; not to glut themselves with Carnage, or enrich themselves by Rapine. For which Reason, they are actuated by an invariable Inclination to Society. They possess the truest Notions of domestic Oeconomy, and have enacted the wisest Laws for political Government.—Their indulgent CREATOR has made them a Present of all necessary Implements, both for constructing their *Combs*, and for composing their *Honey*. They have each a portable Vessel with which they bring Home their collected Sweets: and they have all the most commodious Store houses, in which they deposit their delicious

Wares.—Though made for Peace, they know how to uſe the Sword. They can take up Arms with the utmoſt Reſolution and Intrepidity, when Arms are requiſite to guard their Wealth, or repel their Foes.—Without going through a Courſe of Botany, they can readily diſtinguiſh every Plant, which is moſt likely to yield the Materials proper for their Buſineſs. Without ſerving an Apprenticeſhip in the Laboratory, they are compleat Practitioners in the Art of Separation and Refinement. They are aware, without borrowing their Information from an Almanack, that the vernal Gleams, and Summer Suns, continue but for a Seaſon. Mindful of this Admonition †, they improve to the utmoſt every ſhining Hour; and lay up a Stock of balmy Treaſures, ſufficient to ſupply the whole State, till the Bloſſoms open a-freſh, and their flowery Harveſt returns.

Let the *Peacock* boaſt, if he pleaſes, his elegant Topknot and lofty Mien; his Neck adorned with varying Dyes, and his Train beſpangled with a Round of Stars —Yet let him know, that the deſpiſed *Butterfly*, and even the lothed *Caterpillar*, diſplay an Attire no leſs ſumptuous; and wear Ornaments, altogether as genteel, if not quite ſo magnificent.—— Does Beauty ſit in ſtate on that lordly Bird? She ſhines in Miniature on the vulgar Inſect. Is the Maſter of this lower Creation, enobled with the *Powers* of *Reaſon*? The meaneſt Claſſes of ſenſitive Exiſtence, are endued with the *Faculty* of *Inſtinct*. Which gives them a Sagacity, that is neither derived from Obſervation, nor waits for the Finiſhings of Experience: which, without a Tutor, teaches them all neceſſary Skill; and enables them, without a Pattern, to perform every needful Operation. And, what is far more ſurpriſing, never miſleads them, either into erroneous Principles, or pernicious Practices: never fails them, in the niceſt or moſt arduous of their Undertakings.

Can

† *Venturæque Hyemis memores, Æſtate Laborem*
Experiuntur, & in medium quæſita reponunt. VIRG.

Can you have Patience to follow me, if I ſtep into a different Element, and juſt viſit the *watery World?* —Not one amongſt the innumerable Myriads, which ſwim the boundleſs Ocean, but is watched over by that exalted Eye, whoſe Smiles irradiate the Heaven of Heavens. Not one, but is ſupported by that Almighty Hand, which crowns Angels and Arch-angels with Glory.——The condeſcending GOD, has not only created, but *beautified* them. He has given the moſt exact Proportion to their Shape, the gayeſt Colours to their Skin, and a poliſhed Smoothneſs to their Scales. The Eyes of ſome are ſurrounded with a ſcarlet Circle; the Back of others is diverſified with crimſon Stains. View them, when they glance along the Stream, or while they are freſh from their native Brine; and the burniſhed Silver is not more bright, the radiant Rainbow is ſcarce more glowing, than their vivid, gliſtering, gloſſy Hues.

Yet, notwithſtanding the Finery of their Apparel, We are under painful Apprehenſions for their Welfare.—How can the poor Creatures live, amidſt the ſuffocating Waters?——As they have neither Hands nor Feet, how can they help themſelves, or how eſcape their Enemies?—We are ſoon freed from our Fears by obſerving, that they all poſſeſs the beneficial, as well as ornamental Furniture of *Fins*. Theſe when expanded, like Maſts above, and Ballaſt below, poiſe their floating Bodies, and keep them ſteadily upright ——We cannot forbear congratulating them on the *flexible* Play, and *vigorous* Activity of their Tails. With which they ſhoot themſelves through the Paths of the Sea, more ſwiftly than Sails and Oars can waft the Royal Yatch —But we are loſt in Wonder, at the exquiſite Contrivance, and delicate Formation of their *Gills*. By which they are accommodated, even in that denſe Medium, with the Power of Breathing, and the Benefits of Reſpiration. A Piece of Mechaniſm this, indulged to the meaneſt of the Fry; yet ſurpaſſing, infinitely ſurpaſſing, in the Fineneſs of its Structure, and the Felicity of its Operation, whatever is curious in the Works of Art, or commodious in the Palaces of Princes.

Ther. Some Perſons, *Aſpaſio*, have the Art of giving *Dignity* to trivial, and *Spirit* to jejune Topics. I cannot but liſten, with a pleaſed Attention, to your Diſcourſe; though it deſcends to the loweſt Scenes, and meaneſt Productions of Nature.—To make ſuch philoſophical Remarks, was uſually my Province; to add the religious Improvement, *yours*. But my Thoughts, at preſent, are wholly taken up with the Conſideration of my SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs. I can hardly turn my Views or divert my Speech, to any other Subject. All thoſe amiable Appearances of the external Creation, which I was wont to contemplate with Rapture, afford but a languid Entertainment to my Mind.—Till my Intereſt in this Divine REDEEMER is aſcertained, the Spring may bloom; the Summer ſhine; and Autumn ſwell with Fruits: but it will be Winter, chearleſs, gloomy, deſolate *Winter* in my Soul.

Aſp. You ſay, *Theron*, You attended to my curſory Hints. Then, your own ſuperior Diſcernment could not but perceive, how every Part of the exterior World is adjuſted, in the moſt excellent and gracious Manner.—Not the *coarſeſt* Piece of inactive Matter, but bears the Impreſs of its MAKER's faſhioning Skill.——Not a *ſingle* Creature, however inſignificant, but exhibits evident Demonſtrations of his providential Care.—His Hand is liberal, profuſely liberal to all that breathes, and all that has a Being.

Let me only aſk—and to introduce this Queſtion, with the greater Propriety; to give it a more forcible Energy on our Minds; was the principal Deſign of the preceding Remarks—Let me aſk; *Does GOD take Care for Oxen*?* Is he a generous Benefactor to the meaneſt Animals, to the loweſt Reptiles? Are his munificent Regards extended farther ſtill, and vouchſafed even to the moſt worthleſs Vegetables? And ſhall they be with held from *You*, my dear Friend, and from *me?*—Not one among all the numberleſs Productions, which tread the Ground, or ſtand rooted to the Soil, wants any Convenience, that is proper for its

* 1 Cor. ix. 9.

its reſpective State. And will his heavenly FATHER deny *Theron*, what is ſo neceſſary to his preſent Comfort, and his final Happineſs? Impoſſible*!

Ther. I wiſh for, but I can hardly hope to partake of, that ſpiritual Bleſſing; which always included my whole Happineſs, and now ingroſſes my whole Concern

Aſp. Not hope to partake of! ——What Foundation, what ſhadow of Pretence, has this deſponding Temper, either in Reaſon, or in Scripture? Is it not evident from the whole Book of Revelation? Is it not apparent, through the whole Compaſs of Nature? That the Almighty LORD, "who governeth the "World with the Palm of his Hand †," is remote, infinitely remote, from a niggardly Diſpoſition. He not only provideth for the Wants, but even *ſatisfieth the Deſire of every living Thing* ‖.

Conſider thoſe ſtately *Poppies*, which are now the principal Ornament of the Garden. They have no Tongue to requeſt the leaſt Favour. Yet the ever-gracious MAKER, clothes them from his own Wardrobe, and decks them with exquiſite Beauty.—— Obſerve the *young Ravens*, which ſit careleſly croking on yonder Boughs. Do they cry § for Food? It is in hoarſe inarticulate Accents. Yet the all-ſupport-

 ing

* I know not how to forbear tranſcribing a Paragraph, from one of our periodical Papers; which contains a Propoſal for *adapting* natural Philoſophy to the Capacity of *Children*. Wiſhing, at the ſame time, that the ingenuous Author would inlarge his Sketch into a Treatiſe; and execute the Plan, which He has ſo judiciouſly projected, and of which He has given us ſo delicate a Speciman.

After ſome Remarks on the Sagacity of Birds, their Induſtry, and other ſurpriſing Properties, He adds, "—Is it for Birds, O "LORD, that thou haſt joined together ſo many Miracles, "which they have no Knowledge of? Is it for Men who give no "Attention to them? Is it for the Curious, who are ſatisfied "with admiring, without raiſing their Thoughts to thee? Or is "it not rather viſible, that thy Deſign has been to call Us to thy-"ſelf, by ſuch a Spectacle? To make Us ſenſible of thy Provi-"dence and infinite Wiſdom; and to fill Us with *Confidence*, in "thy Bounty, who watcheſt, with ſo much Care and Tenderneſs, "over Birds, though two of them are ſold but for a Farthing?"

† Eccluſ. xviii. 3. ‖ Pſal. cxlv. 16. § Pſal. cxlvii. 9.

ing GOD, overlooks their Ignorance; hears Meaning in their Noiſe; and ſupplies their every Need, from his own ſpontaneous Bounty.——If He accommodates the former, though incapable of aſking; if He attends to the latter, though inſenſible of their Benefactor; can He *diſregard* our preſſing Wants? Will He *reject* our earneſt Petitions? Eſpecially, when We ſeek ſuch pure and exalted Gifts, as it is both his Delight and his Honour to beſtow.

O! my Friend, look abroad into univerſal Nature, and look away every diſquieting Thought.

Ther. Did you inquire what Pretence I have for this deſponding Temper? Alas! I have more than a Pretence. I have a Reaſon. A Reaſon too obvious; my great *Unworthineſs!*

Aſp. Pray, where was the Worthineſs of the ſtiff-necked *Iſraelites?* Yet the LORD *bare them, and carried them, all the Days of old**.—Where was the Worthineſs of *Saul* the Blaſphemer? Yet the bleſſed *JESUS* made Him a choſen Veſſel, and ſet Him as a Signet on his Right-hand.——You deſerve nothing at the Hand of GOD our SAVIOUR. Neither did *Joſeph*'s Brethren deſerve any Kindneſs from the Viceroy of *Egypt*. Yet he delivered *them* from Famine, who ſold *Him* to Slavery. He ſettled them in the choiceſt Territories, who caſt Him into the horrible Pit. He ſhewed Himſelf a Friend and a Father to thoſe unnatural Relations; who were his actual Betrayers, and his intentional Murderers.——And can You perſuade yourſelf, will You harbour a Suſpicion, that *CHRIST* is leſs compaſſionate than *Joſeph?* Shall a frail Mortal out-vie *IMMANUEL* in Beneficence?

Ther. Is not *ſome* Righteouſneſs of our own indiſpenſably required, in order to our Participation of the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST?*

Aſp. Yes, ſuch a Righteouſneſs as the *Samaritan* Woman†, and *Zaccheus* the Publican poſſeſſed. Or ſuch as the *Philippian* Jailor, and the profligate *Corinthians*

* Iſai. lxii. 9. † John iv. 18.

thians might boaſt *.——*Zaccheus* was a Man of infamous Character, and Chief among the Extortioners. The Jailor was a barbarous Perſecutor, and in Purpoſe a Self murderer. Yet our LORD ſays of the former, *This Day*, without injoining any Courſe of previous Preparation, *is Salvation come to thine Houſe* †. St. *Paul* directs the latter, without inſiſting upon any antecedent Righteouſneſs, to *believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST*; and aſſures the poor alarmed Sinner, that in ſo doing, He ſhould *be ſaved* ‖.

So that nothing is required in order to our Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits, but a Conviction of *our* Need, a Senſe of *their* Worth, and a Willingneſs to receive them in the appointed Way; receive them, as the freeſt of Gifts, or as Matter of mere Grace. *Come and take freely* §, is our MASTER's Language; without ſtaying to acquire any graceful Qualities, is his Meaning.

Ther. Surely, to come without any Holineſs, without any *decent* Preparative, muſt be a groſs *Indignity* to the Divine *JESUS*. Whoever preſents a Petition to any earthly Sovereign, will think it abſolutely neceſſary, not to appear in a ſlovenly Diſhabille, much leſs in filthy Raiment. Does not our LORD Himſelf, in the Parable of the Wedding-Garment, inculcate this very Point, and caution Us againſt a preſumptuous Approach?

Aſp. In the Parable You mention *CHRIST* is both the Bridegroom, the Feaſt, and the Wedding-Garment ‡. And *who* are invited to an Union with this Bridegroom? To be Gueſts at this Feaſt? To be arrayed with this Wedding-Garment?—The Meſſengers are ſent, not to the Manſion houſes of the Rich, or the Palaces of the Mighty; but to the *Highways and Hedges*. Where Miſery mourns; and Poverty pines; and Baſeneſs hides her Head.—*To whom* is

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. † Luke xix. 9. ‖ Acts xvi. 31. § Rev. xxii. 17.

‡ *Matt.* xxii. 11. *Hæc Veſtis eſt Juſtitia CHRISTI.* BENGEL. in Loc.

their Meſſage addreſſed? To the *Poor*, the *Maimed*, the *Halt*, the *Blind* *. Perſons who have no amiable or recommending Endowments, but every *lotheſome* and *diſguſtful* Property. Yet theſe (mark the Paſſage, my dear Friend; mark well the encouraging Circumſtance) *theſe* are not only not forbidden, but intreated —importuned—and, by all the Arts of Perſuaſion, by every weighty or winning Motive, *compelled to come in*. —And after all this, ſurely, it cannot be an Act of Preſumption to accept, but muſt be a Breach of Duty to refuſe the Invitation.

Ther. You take no notice of the Man, who was found without a Wedding Garment. Which is by far the moſt *alarming* Incident, and that which gives me no ſmall Uneaſineſs.

Aſp. And does my *Theron* take proper Notice of the Divine Declaration? *I have prepared my Dinner*, ſays the KING eternal. *All Things are ready* †. "Whatever is neceſſary for the Juſtification, the Holineſs, "the complete Salvation of Sinners, is provided in "the Merit and the Grace of my SON. Let them "come therefore, as to a nuptial Banquet; and freely enjoy my Munificence; and feaſt their Souls "with the royal Proviſion."

The Man without a Wedding Garment, denotes the ſpecious, *ſuperficial* Profeſſor; who is *called by CHRIST's* Name, but has never *put on CHRIST JESUS* by Faith.—Shall I tell You more plainly, whom this Character repreſents? You yourſelf, my dear *Theron*, were ſome Months ago, in the State of this unhappy Creature. When You truſted in Yourſelf, and thought highly of your own, thought meanly of your SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs.

I congratulate my Friend, on his happy Deliverance from ſo dangerous a Condition. You and I are now like the returning Prodigal. Let us remember, that He came with no Recommendation, either of Dreſs, of Perſon, or of Character. None but his Nakedneſs, his Miſery, and an Acknowledgment

* Luke xiv. 21. † Matt. xxii. 4.

ment of Vileneſs, which had every aggravating, not one extenuating Circumſtance. Yet He was received —received with inexpreſſible Indulgence; and cloth-ed with that firſt, that *beſt*, that divineſt *Robe* ‖, the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Let Us accuſtom Ourſelves to conſider this incom-parable Robe, under its evangelical Character. It is not a Matter of Bargain, nor the Subject of Sale, but a Deed of Gift. *The Gift of Righteouſneſs*, ſays the Apoſtle. And Gifts, We all know, are not to be *purchaſed* but *received*.

Ther. Is nothing then, nothing to be done on our Part?—No Heavenly mindedneſs to be exerciſed? No Victory over our Luſts gained? No Fruits of Sanctifi-cation produced?

Aſp. Theſe legal Apprehenſions! How cloſely they cleave to my *Theron*'s Mind! But, I hope, the Word of GOD, which pierceth to the dividing aſunder the Soul and Spirit, will give the ſevering Blow.——And what ſays that ſacred Word? It deſcribes the Goſpel, as a *Will* or *Teſtament* †; and all its glorious Bleſſings, as *Legacies* bequeathed by the dying *JESUS*.—— When your old Acquaintance *Charicles*, left You a handſome Legacy; what did you *do*, to eſtabliſh your Title, and make it your own?

Ther. My Title was pre-eſtabliſhed, by my Friend's Donation. I had nothing to do, but to claim, to ac-cept, and to poſſeſs.

‖ *Luke* xv. 22. Την στολην την πρωτην.

† *Heb.* ix. 16, 17. This Notion not only runs through the Scriptures, but ſtands conſpicuous even in their Title Page.—— What are they called? THE OLD and THE NEW TESTAMENT. ----What is a Teſtament? An authentic Deed, in which Eſtates are tranſmitted, and Legacies bequeathed. In other Teſtaments, ſome *earthly* Poſſeſſion; in this, the *heavenly* Patrimony, even all the Riches of Grace, and the everlaſting Inheritance of Glory.— Did we conſider the Scriptures in this Light, it would be a moſt engaging Invitation, to ſearch them with Aſſiduity and Pleaſure. What Child is willing to continue ignorant of a deceaſed Parent's laſt Will and Teſtament? Who does not covet to know, what Honours, Hereditaments, and Wealth devolve to his Enjoyment, by ſuch an intereſting and venerable Conveyance?

Asp. Do the very same, in the present Case. They who believe, are Heirs, undoubted *Heirs of the Righteousness which is by Faith**.—Sure you cannot suppose, that *CHRIST*'s Kindness is less sincere, or that *CHRIST*'s Donations are less valid, than those of an earthly Testator.

Ther. This Illustration hardly reaches the Point. I speak not of doing any thing, by way of *Merit*, but by way of *Qualification.*

Asp. If there be any Qualification, I think, it is our extreme Indigence. This, indeed, it will be proper to have: and this, I presume, you are not without. Other Qualifications, neither Reason prescribes, nor Scripture requires.

Reason prescribes no other.—The Gifts of the great eternal SOVEREIGN are intended, not to recognize our imaginary Worth, but to aggrandize our Views of his Mercy and Grace. To answer *such* a Design, the Unworthy and the Sinners are duly qualified; nay, are the *only* qualified Persons.

Scripture requires no other.——The ever-merciful SAVIOUR says not; They are unqualified for my Merits. They have no valuable or noble Acquirements. But this is his tender Complaint; *They will not come to me*, just as they are; with all their Sins about them; with all their Guilt upon them; *that they may have Life* †.—Pray, take notice of this Text; and you will see Things placed in a new Light, ranged in a new Order. Sanctification, Heavenly-mindedness, and a Victory over our Lusts, are not so much the Qualities which He *requires*, as the Blessings which He will *confer.*

Ther. "The Unworthy and Sinners, the *only* "*qualified!*" Of this Expression I cannot but take particular Notice.—Then *Judas* should stand in the first Rank of qualified Persons; and the devout Centurion, *whose Prayers and Alms had come up as a Memorial before GOD*, was thereby unqualified for the Favour of Heaven.

Asp.

* Heb. xi. 7. † John v. 40.

Asp. If you observed my Expression, I spoke in the hypothetical Manner, made a Supposition, rather than advanced an Assertion. *If* there be any Qualification, this is the only one. But, strictly speaking, there is no such thing. The impulsive or inclining Cause, of all GOD's Favour shewn, of all GOD's Goodness exercised, is——from the Creature? No? but from *Himself*, Himself *alone*, *He has Mercy*, not because this or that Person is amiable, is meet, or qualified, but *because he will have Mercy.*—And as for our Need of Mercy and Reconciliation, arising from our Sinfulness, this can no more constitute a *real* Qualification for the Blessings, than an Act of Rebellion can qualify for the first Honours of the State.

But this We must allow, that such Need, such Misery, such Sinfulness, illustrate the *Freeness*, and manifest the *Riches* of Grace. And this We should never forget, that GOD's first and leading Purpose, in all his favourable Dispensations to fallen Man, is, to demonstrate the Sovereignty, and advance the Glory of his Grace.——The LORD, promising a very extraordinary Deliverance to *Israel*, says; *not for your Sakes, be it known unto You; do I do this** signal Act of Kindness.—What then is the Inducement? We find it in the following Declaration; *I, even I, am HE, that blotteth out your Transgressions for my own Sake*†, and *according to the good Pleasure of my Will.*—What is the End of all? It is FOR THE PRAISES OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE‡. A proper Motto this, for all the Displays of divine Goodness to sinful Men. It has been inscribed by the Hand of Truth and Inspiration. Time and Eternity,

* Ezek. xxxvi. 32.

† *Isai.* xliii. 25. למעני *For my own Sake.* Which teaches Us, that GOD, and nothing in the Creature, is the original, intire, sole Cause of all Grace and every gracious Vouchsafement. It is not only *by* Him, and *through* Him, but *to* Him; for the Honour of his benign Perfections, that we are pardoned, accepted, saved.

‡ Eph. i. 6.

nity, instead of erasing the Lines, will only stamp them deeper, and open them wider.

Ther. This is such a Gift!—To be interested in all the Merits of *CHRIST!* To have his immaculate Righteousness imputed to my Soul!—So that from henceforth there shall be no Fear of Condemnation, but a comfortable Enjoyment of freest Love, and a delightful Expectation of completest Glory.

Asp. If this rich Donation, surpass your very Thoughts, and fill You with grateful Astonishment: it is so much the better adapted to display, what the Scripture very emphatically styles, the *abundant*, the *superabundant*, the *exceeding abundant* * Grace of our GOD—GOD hath Pleasure in the Prosperity of his Servants. He is a boundless Ocean of Love ever flowing, yet absolutely inexhaustible. See! What an innumerable Variety of Benefits, are transmitted from yonder Sun to gladden all the Regions of Nature! Yet the Sun is but a *Spark*; its highest Splendor, no more than a *Shade*, its uninterrupted and most profuse Communications of Light, a poor diminutive *Scantling*; compared with the Riches of Divine *Benignity*.

The Servant in the Parable, who owed ten thousand Talents, craved only some merciful Forbearance. Whereas, his generous Lord remitted the whole Sum, and gave him an Acquittance in full; *I forgave Thee all that Debt* †—You wonder, and very deservedly, at such vast Generosity. But, what had been your Admiration to see the noble Master admitting this obnoxious Slave, to a Share in his Dignity? What if he had made so worthless a Wretch, the chief of his Family, and the Heir of his Estate? This perhaps, You would say, exceeds the Bounds of Credibility. Yet GOD Almighty's stupendous Beneficence exceeds all this. He not only spares guilty Creatures, but makes them his *Children*; makes them *Inheritors* of his Kindom; and as an Intro-

* Υπερβαλλουσα χαρις. 2 Cor. ix. 14.—Υπερεπερισσευσεν η χαρις. Rom. v. 20.—Υπερεπλεονασεν η χαρις. 2 Tim. i. 14.

† Matt. xviii. 32.

Introduction to all, or rather as the Crown of all, makes them *Partakers* * of his SON.

Ther. The Gift is ineſtimable; of more Value than all Worlds. It will render me bleſſed and happy, Now and for Ever. And may ſo unworthy a Creature look for a Bleſſing, thus ſuperlatively excellent?

Aſp. Unworthy!——My dear Friend, dwell no longer upon that obſolete Topic. The greateſt *Unworthineſs* is no Objection in CHRIST's Account, when the Soul is convinced of Sin, and the Heart deſirous of a SAVIOUR. And as for *Worthineſs*, this is as much diſavowed by the Goſpel, as *equivocal* Generation † is exploded by the Diſcoveries of our improved Philoſophy.—Nay farther, this Notion is diametrically *contrary* to the Goſpel, and totally *ſubverſive* of the Covenant of Grace.

Ther. In what Reſpect?

Aſp. Becauſe, it would make our own Duty and Obedience the Terms. Whereas, the Terms were CHRIST's Suffering, and CHRIST's Obedience. *Theſe* are the Hinge on which that great Tranſaction turns, and on which the Hope of the World hangs.

Ther. Be more particular, *Aſpaſio*.

Aſp. The firſt Covenant was made with *Adam*, for Himſelf and Us. Breaking it, He loſt his original Righteouſneſs, and became ſubject to Death. Was, at once, a *Bankrupt* and a *Rebel*.—Now you cannot ſuppoſe, that the Almighty MAJESTY would enter into a freſh Covenant, with an *inſolvent* and *attainted* Creature. It pleaſed, therefore the SECOND PERSON of the adorable TRINITY, to undertake our Cauſe; to become our Surety; and put Himſelf in our Stead. *With Him* the ſecond Covenant was made. He was charged with the Performance

* Heb. iii. 14.

† The *Ancients* imagined, that many Vegetables and Inſects were produced by, I know not what, plaſtic Power in the Sun and other Elements. This is called *equivocal* Generation. Whereas, the *modern* Philoſophers maintain, that every Individual of this Kind, derives its Being from ſome Parent-Vegetable or Parent Animal. This is ſtyled *univocal* Generation.

ance of the Conditions; thereby to obtain Pardon and Righteouſneſs, Grace and Glory, for all his People. *I have made a Covenant with my CHOSEN ONE*, is the Language of the MOST HIGH. And the Terms were, (You will permit me to repeat the momentous Truth) not your Worthineſs or mine, but the Incarnation, the Obedience, the Death of GOD's ever bleſſed SON.

Ther. Has Man then no Office aſſigned, no Part to act, in the Covenant of Grace?

Aſp. He has: but it is a Part, which my Friend ſeems very loth to diſcharge. His Part is to *accept* the Bleſſings, fully purchaſed by the SAVIOUR, and freely preſented to the Sinner. His Part is, not to diſhonour the REDEEMER's gracious Interpoſition, and infinitely ſufficient Performance, by hankering after any Merit of his own. His Part (why will you conſtrain me to reiterate in this Manner?) is, not to bring Money in his Hand, with the ten Brethren; but, with an empty Hand, and like an impoveriſhed *Lazarus*, *to take hold of* GOD's *Covenant* †.

Ther. If this be the Nature of the New Covenant, I muſt confeſs, I have hitherto been Ignorant of the Goſpel.

Aſp. And from hence ariſes your preſent Diſtreſs. From hence your Averſeneſs to receive Comfort.——

You

* *Pſal.* lxxxix. 3. It is generally allowed, that this Pſalm, in its *ſublimeſt* Senſe, is referable to *CHRIST*; and, in its *full* Extent, is referable *only* unto *CHRIST*. If ſo, I think, it would be more ſignificant and emphatical, to render בְּחִירִי *My CHOSEN ONE*.—This will furniſh out a very clear and cogent Argument to prove, that the Covenant of Grace was made with our *LORD JESUS*. Juſt ſuch an Argument as the Apoſtle uſes, to convince the *Galatians*, That the Promiſes of the Covenant were made to the ſame Divine PERSON, *Gal.* iii. 16. —From both which Premiſes this important Concluſion follows; That Juſtification and every ſpiritual Bleſſing are the *Purchaſe* of *CHRIST*'s Obedience; are lodged in Him as the great *Proprietary*; are *communicated* to Sinners, only through the Exerciſe of *Faith*, or in a Way of Believing. See *Zech.* ix. 21.

† Iſai. lvi. 4.

You are a Philoſopher, *Theron*; and have been accuſtomed to examine nicely the Proportion of Objects, rather than to weigh them in the Balance of the Sanctuary. Here you find all Proportion ſwallowed up and loſt. This quite overthrows all your Concluſions, drawn from the Fitneſs of Things. Here, *Man* is nothing, leſs than nothing, while *Grace* is in all—And ſhould we not, however unworthy in Ourſelves, magnify the Grace of our GOD?

Ther. Moſt certainly.

Aſp. How can this be done, but by expecting great and ſuperlatively precious Bleſſings from his Hand?—*Alexander*, You know, had a famous, but indigent Philoſopher, in his Court. Our Adept in Science, was once particularly ſtraitened in his Circumſtances. To whom ſhould he apply, but to his Patron, the Conqueror of the World? His Requeſt was no ſooner made, than granted. *Alexander* gives him a Commiſſion, to receive of his Treaſurer whatever he wanted. He immediately demands, in his Sovereign's Name, a hundred Talents *.—The Treaſurer, ſurprized at ſo large a Demand, refuſes to comply: but waits upon the King, and repreſents the Affair. Adding withal, how unreaſonable He thought the Petition, and how exorbitant the Sum.—*Alexander* hears Him with Patience: but, as ſoon as He had ended his Remonſtrance, replies; "Let the Money be inſtantly paid. I am delighted "with this Philoſopher's way of thinking. He has "done me a ſingular Honour; and ſhewed by the "Largeneſs of his Requeſt, what a high Idea He "has conceived, both of my ſuperior Wealth, and "my royal Munificence."

Thus, my dear *Theron*, let Us honour, what the inſpired Penman ſtiles, *The marvelous Loving-kindneſs of JEHOVAH*. From the King, *whoſe Name is the LORD of Hoſts*, let Us expect——not barely what correſponds with our low Models of Generoſity—much leſs what We ſuppoſe proportioned

* About ten thouſand Pound.

oned to our fancied Deſerts—but what is ſuitable to the unknown Magnificence of his Name, and the unbounded Benevolence of his Heart. Then We ſhall chearfully and aſſuredly truſt, that *CHRIST JESUS* will be *made of GOD to Us Wiſdom, and Righteouſneſs, and Sanctification, and Redemption:* that HE who hath *given* Himſelf for Us *, will *give* Us of his SPIRIT †, and will *give* unto Us eternal Life ‡.

Ther. Yes; upon Condition that We fight the good Fight, and finiſh our Courſe of Duty. *Henceforth*, ſays the Apoſtle, after this is done, *there is laid up for me*, and for other victorious Soldiers, for other faithful Labourers, *a Crown of Righteouſneſs*.

Aſp. To ſuch Perſons the Crown will aſſuredly be vouchſafed. But it is vouchſafed, on account of their ſucceſsful Warfare, or perſevering Obedience? If ſo, *Iſrael may vaunt themſelves, and ſay, Mine own Hand*, not the REDEEMER's Interpoſition *hath ſaved me* §.

Not to repeat what has already been alledged, in Oppoſition to this Opinion——Not to produce what might farther be urged, from a Variety of ſcriptural Teſtimonies——I ſhall only deſire You to obſerve, what the Apoſtle himſelf adds in this very Place, *There is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs:* but is this the Pay, proportionate and due to his own Services? Is it what He claims and demands, on the Foot of Duty performed?——The very Title of the Reward implies the contrary. It is *a Crown of Righteouſneſs*, becauſe purchaſed by the meritorious and conſummate Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. The Action of the Judge declares the contrary: *which the LORD, the righteous Judge, ſhall* give *me at that Day*. It is, You ſee, an Act of Favour; the Iſſue of unmerited Bounty; what neither Saint, nor Martyr,

* Eph. v. 2. † John iv. 13. ‡ John x. 28.
§ Judg. vii. 8.

tyr, nor Apoſtle enjoys, but only by way of gracious Donation *.

I would fain have my *Theron* form more honourable Apprehenſions concerning the Mercy and the Bounty of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. He will beſtow, what You ſuppoſe He exacts. He is really a Benefactor, where You would repreſent Him as a Taſk-maſter. *The LORD will give Grace as well as Glory.* He knows, You have neither Strength nor Merit, therefore He will ſupply your Want of both, from his own unfathomable Fulneſs.

Ther. Ah! My *Aſpaſio!* You don't know my State. I have not only no Merit, but great Guilt †. Was, by Nature, a Child of Wrath. Have been by Practice a Slave to Sin. And, what is worſe, am ſtill corrupt; have ſtill a carnal Heart.—And has not ſuch a Wretch forfeited all Title to the Divine Favour? Nay, does he not deſerve the Vengeance of eternal Fire?

Aſp.

* 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. The Word ἀποδωσει, as it ſtands in the preſent Connection, is, I think, very properly explained by a late pious profeſſor of Divinity at *Glaſgow: Profitetur Fiduciam ſuam de gratuita Mercede, quam DEUS gratis promiſit omnibus Fidelibus, & ut juſtus Judex, juſte ſimul & ex Gratia rependet, non ex Merito ullo noſtro, ſed priora Dona ſua gratuita poſterioribus gratuitò cumulando.* DICSONI *Expoſ. Analyt.*

† I believe, No One *experienced* in the ſpiritual Life will ſuſpect, that *Theron* ſpeaks *out of Character*——Conſcience, when, once alarmed, is a ſtubborn and unceremonious Thing. It pays no Deference to Wealth: it never ſtands in awe of Grandeur: neither can it be ſoothed by the Refinements of Education, or the Attainments of Learning. And We generally find, that a moſt unaccountable Propenſity to *Self worthineſs*, ſtrongly poſſeſſes the new-awakened Convert. He is perpetually raiſing Objections, founded on the Want of perſonal Merit; notwithſtanding all our Remonſtrances, to quiet his Fears, and remove his Jealouſies. It is truly a hard Taſk, for a Mind, naturally leavened with legal Pride, to come naked and miſerable to *CHRIST*—to come, diveſted of every Recommendation but that of extreme Wretchedneſs; and receive, from the Hand of unmerited Benignity, the free Riches of evangelical Grace.

Asp. That we all deserve this Misery, is beyond Dispute. I am truly glad, that We are sensible of our Demerit. Here our Recovery begins. Now We are to believe, that the *LORD JESUS* has satisfied Divine Justice; has paid a glorious Price, on purpose to obtain for such ill-deserving, such Hell-deserving Creatures, all Pardon, all Holiness, and everlasting Happiness. According to the Import of that charming Scripture, *When we were Enemies* (and what is there in an Enemy, to bespeak Favour, or deserve Benefits?) *We were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his SON* *.

You have *great Guilt*. But is this a Reason, why You should be excluded from the Blessings of the Covenant? Contemplate the State of that forlorn and wretched Outcast, described in the sixteenth of *Ezekiel*. An Infant *in its Blood:* this represents a Sinner, who has nothing to excite Love, but all that may provoke Abhorrence. Yet what says the HOLY ONE of *Israel? When I saw Thee*, not washed, and purified, and made meet for my Acceptance, but *polluted in thy Blood* †; loathsome with Defilement, and laden with Iniquity: Then, even then, *I said unto Thee, Live: I spread my Skirt over Thee; and Thou becamest mine.* This is the Manner of his Proceeding, not barely to one Nation, but to all his People; not in one Period of Time only, but through all Generations.

You are *still corrupt:* One that is sensible of his Corruption, and acknowledges his Sinfulness! Then You are the *very Person*, for whom the SAVIOUR's Righteousness is intended; to whom it is promised. —You are a Governor of the County-hospital, *Theron*. You have been industrious in promoting, and are active in supporting, that excellent Institution; where

* Rom. v. 10.

† The Words are peculiarly emphatical; not only doubled, but redoubled. To denote, at once, the *Strangeness* of the Fact, yet the *Certainty* of the Favour. *When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own Blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live: Yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live.* Ezek. xvi. 6.

where Medicine with her healing Stores, and Religion with her heavenly Hopes, act as joint Handmaids to Charity. What are the Circumstances, which render any Persons the proper Objects, for an Admission into your Infirmary?

Ther. Their Poverty, and their Distemper. Without *Poverty*, they would not need; and, free from *Distemper*, they would not prize, the Benefit of our modern *Bethesda*.

Asp. Apply this to the Case under Consideration. The whole World is in a State of spiritual Disorder. *CHRIST* is styled, by the inspired Writer, *The LORD our Healer* *. The Gift of his Righteousness, the Balm of his Blood, and the Influences of his SPIRIT, are the sovereign Restorative. And sure it cannot be a fanciful Persuasion of our Health, but a feeling Conviction of our Disease, which renders Us proper Objects of his recovering Grace.—*He came, not to call the Righteous*, the Righteous in their own Eyes, *but Sinners* †; self-condemned and ruined Sinners, *to* give them *Repentance*, and Pardon, and Newness of Life.

Ther. But, if any foolish and refractory Patients have abused our Beneficence; it is a standing unalterable Rule of the House, never to admit them a second Time; however pressing their Exigencies, or however powerful their Recommender. I have, not once only, but through the whole Course of my Life, abused the marvelous Loving-kindness of the LORD.

Asp. And is not the LORD superior to all his Creatures, in Acts of *Pardon*, as well as of *Power*? Yes; as those Heavens are higher, than this prostrate Earth; so much more inlarged and extensive is the divine Clemency—than the widest Sphere of human Kindness, shall I say? Rather than the boldest Flights of human Imagination. Your Statutes are inexorable, in case of one notorious Irregularity committed. *But the free Gift* of a REDEEMER's Righteousness is vouchsafed, notwithstanding *many Offences*,

* Exod. xv. 26. † Matt. ix. 13. Acts v. 31.

Offences, unto Justification *. It is the Glory of our Almighty RULER, and redounds to the Honour of his crucified SON, to pass over † not a single Transgression only, but a multitude of Provocations; to be altogether as unequal in Mercy, as HE is absolutely supreme in Majesty.

As it is the *greatest Pride*, to entertain high Notions of our own Accomplishments, or to expect eternal Life on the Score of our own Obedience; so it will be the *greatest Affront* to the Grandeur of *CHRIST*'s Merits, and the Freeness of his Grace, if We suppose our Crimes too heinous to be forgiven, or our Persons too vile to be accepted.

Theron paused—These Considerations seemed to operate: This Anodyne to take effect.—Desirous to improve the favourable Juncture, and impart the needed Consolation, *Aspasio* added:

How often did the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* disregard the Warnings, and reject the Counsels of our Blessed LORD! How justly might HE have sworn in his Wrath; "They shall never hear the joyful Sound of my Gospel more. The Blessings, which "they have so wantonly despited, and so wickedly "abused, shall be irrevocably withdrawn."—Instead of passing such a Sentence, this is the Charge, which, after his Resurrection, He gives to his Apostles: *Let Repentance and Remission of Sins be preached, in my Name, to all Nations*, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM ‡.—"At *Jerusalem*, LORD! Have not the Men of that "ungrateful and barbarous City been deaf to thy tenderest Importunities? Did they not persecute Thee "unto Condemnation and Death? Are not their "Weapons still reeking, as it were, with thy Blood; "and their Tongues still shooting out Arrows, even "bitter Words? By which they would murder thy "Character, as they have already crucified thy Person."—Yet these Wretches (and could any be more inhuman? Could any be more unworthy?) are not only not abhorred, but unto them is the Message of Grace,

* Rom. v. 16. † Prov. xix. 11.
‡ Luke xxiv. 47.

Grace, and the Word of Salvation ſent Nay, to ſhew the unparalleled Freeneſs of our REDEEMER's Grace, Theſe are *firſt* upon the heavenly Liſt. The glad Tidings of Pardon and Life, which are to be publiſhed through the World, *muſt begin* (amazing Mercy!) MUST BEGIN at *Jeruſalem.*

Ther. Thus much may I venture to profeſs in my own Behalf: That I long for this Bleſſing—I pray for this Bleſſing—But I cannot ſee my Title, to this comprehenſive and ineſtimable Bleſſing, *clear.*

Aſp. I behold it perfectly clear.—Some Days ago, a worthy Clergyman, who lately came to ſettle in the Neighbourhood did Himſelf the Honour of making one at your Table. After Dinner, You ſhewed Him your Library; We took a Walk in your Garden; and made the agreeable Tour of the Fiſhponds. Then —with that amiable Frankneſs of Mein and Accent, which is ſo peculiar to my Friend, and exceedingly endears all his Favours—You told him; "That He "was as welcome to any Book in your Study, as if "the whole Collection was his own That if, on a "Viſit from ſome Acquaintance of ſuperior Rank He "ſhould wiſh to be accommodated with a more deli- "cate Entertainment than uſual; the Productions of "your Waters, and of your Hot beds were entirely "at his Service. And that his Acceptance of your "Offers, without the leaſt Shyneſs or Reſerve, would "be the moſt pleaſing Compliment, He could pay "You on the Occaſion."

What ſays the great PROPRIETOR of all Good? *If any Man*, however unworthy his Perſon, or obnoxious his Character, *thirſt*; thirſt for the Bleſſings of my evangelical Kingdom; *let Him come unto ME*, the Fountain of theſe living Waters, *and drink* his Fill*.—You Yourſelf acknowledge, that You long for the ſacred Privileges of the Goſpel. Your Heart is awakened into habitual and lively Deſires after the Salvation of *CHRIST*. What is this but, in the ſpiritual Senſe, to thirſt? To You therefore the Promiſe is made. To You the Riches of this benign Diſpenſation belong. That

* John vii. 37.

That Clergyman has not the leaſt Suſpicion of being diſappointed, in caſe He ſhould ſend for a Brace of Carp from your Canal, or a fine Melon from your Garden——Why is He ſo confident? Becauſe He has done You any ſignal Service? No; but becauſe You have paſſed your Word, and made the generous Offer.——And why ſhould You harbour the leaſt Doubt, concerning the Divine Veracity? Why ſhould You call in queſtion your Right to theſe heavenly Treaſures? Since it is founded on a Grant, altogether as *free*, altogether as *clear*, as your own indulgent Conceſſion; and infinitely more *firm*, than any human Engagement. Founded on the Fidelity of that ſublime BEING, who, "remembers his Covenant and Pro-"miſe to a thouſand Generations."

Ther. It is impoſſible to confute, yet difficult to believe, what You urge.

Aſp. What I urge, is not the Voice of a few dubious Paſſages, nicely culled from the Book of GOD, or forcibly wreſted by the Interpretation of Man. The whole Tenour of Inſpiration runs, with the greateſt Perſpicuity, and the greateſt Uniformity, in this delightful Strain.—Let me, out of a Multitude, produce another Expreſs from the Court of Heaven. *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come Ye to the Waters, even He that hath no Money. Come Ye, buy and eat: yea; come, buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price**. *Wine* and *Milk*, undoubtedly ſignify the Pardon of our Sins, and the Juſtification of our Perſons; the Communications of ſanctifying Grace, and the Hope of eternal Glory. Theſe are nouriſhing and refreſhing to the Soul, as Milk the richeſt of Foods, and as Wine the beſt of Cordials, are to the Body.—Theſe, You ſee, are to be obtained, *without Money*, and *without Price:* without any Merit of our own; without any Plea deduced from Ourſelves; by poor, undone, periſhing Bankrupts.—— They are to be enjoyed by *every One*, who unfeignedly eſteems them, and humbly ſeeks them. No Exception is made. No excluſive Clauſe added. It is not ſaid, Any

* Iſai. lv. 1.

Any One that is *worthy*, but Every one that *thirſteth*. —To leave no Room for any miſgiving Apprehenſions, the kind Invitation is repeated; *buy and eat*; *buy Wine and Milk*. The invaluable yet free Tender, is confirmed again and again; *He that hath no Money*; *without Money*; *without Price*. And both are preſſed upon Us with a very remarkable, with the moſt affectionate Vehemence; *Come Ye*; *come Ye*; *yea come*.

Had our heavenly BENEFACTOR permitted Us to draw up this Inſtrument of Conveyance, and word it according to our own Wiſh; what Language could We have contrived, to render either the Grant more free, or our Claim more ſecure?

Ther. Theſe are chearing Truths. They amount to little leſs than a Demonſtration. And I am ready to declare, in the Language of *Agrippa*; *Almoſt* Thou perſuadeſt me to commence a Believer.

Aſp. And why, my dear Friend, why not *altogether?* Can You diſtruſt the Sincerity of the divine Overtures? If the Overtures are real, your Title is unqueſtionable.—Nay, there is more than Overture. You have an *actual* Guilt, from the Almighty MAJESTY. *To Us*, ſays the Prophet—including all that wait for the Redemption of *CHRIST*, and the Conſolation of *Iſrael—a Child is born* *. *To Us*—He repeats the precious Truth; to declare his exuberant Joy †, and denote the abſolute Certainty ‡ of the Thing—*a Son is given*. Even GOD's own SON, the ever-bleſſed *JESUS*, to be our PROPITIATION, our SURETY, our complete REDEEMER. *

Juſt

* Iſai. ix. 6.

† *Virgil* has copied the Prophet's *fine Manner*. He repreſents Joy, uttering her Sentiments, in the ſame ſpirited Strain, with the ſame reiterated Earneſtneſs:

Humilemque videmus
Italiam. Italiam *primus conclamat Achates*,
Italiam *læto Socii Clamore ſalutant*.

‡ See Gen. xli. 32.

Juſt caſt a Look upon yonder neat Lodge. Though placed in the Center of a ſpacious Field, it ſeems to be contiguous with the Extremity of the Viſta. The Eye, traveling over ſuch a Length of Ground, has almoſt loſt the Windows, and the decent Ornaments of the Front. But I ſhall not ſoon loſe the Idea of that amiable Munificence; which, as I was rambling one pleaſant Morning, and accidentally called at the Houſe, I learned from its preſent Owner—He was, I find, one of your Servants. Had ſpent ſeveral Years in your Family. When He ſettled in the World, You beſtowed upon him that commodious Box and a pretty adjacent Farm; to poſſeſs, without Moleſtation or Controul, during his Life.——Does He not reckon the little Eſtate, by virtue of your Donation, to be his own? As much his own, for the Time preſcribed, as if he had paid an Equivalent in Money?—Since the LORD JEHOVAH *has given* Us his SON, and all his unutterable Merits; why ſhould We not, with an Aſſurance of Faith, receive the incomparable Gift? Why ſhould we not confide in it, as firmer than the firmeſt Deed? and far more inviolable, than any royal Patent?—Eſpecially, ſince it has been *ſealed* to Us, in every ſacramental Ordinance; and *witneſſed* by every good Motion of the HOLY SPIRIT in our Hearts.

Ther. My Servant never affronted my Authority. If He had vilified my Character, or inſulted my Perſon, ſhould I then have been inclined to make the ſame advantageous Settlement?

Aſp. Herein appears the infinite Superiority of the divine Bounty. GOD is rich in Mercy, not only to the Obedient and Grateful, but to the Unthankful and Unworthy. *The LORD our GOD*, ſays the Prophet, *belong Mercies and Forgiveneſſes*; in Meaſure ſuperabundant, and in Continuance unwearied. And this, *notwithſtanding We have* offended Him, by our manifold Failures in Duty. Nay, have *rebelled* againſt him*, by flagrant Violations of his Law.

In

* *Dan.* ix. 9. The Original is מרדנו than which no Expreſſion, in the *Hebrew* Language, bears a more obnoxious Signification

In sweet Concert with this prophetical Lesson, sings the transported *Psalmist*; *Thou, LORD*, in thy sacred Humanity, *hast ascended up on High:* ascended, from the low Caverns of the Tomb, to the highest Throne in the highest Heavens.—*Thou hast led Captivity captive:* hast abolished Death, that universal Tyrant; and subdued those Powers of Darkness, which had inslaved the whole World.—Like a glorious *and* triumphant Conqueror, Thou hast also *received Gifts*; not merely for thy own Fruition, but to confer on Others, by way of honorary and enriching Largess.—What are those Gifts, *Theron?*

Ther. The Gifts of the Gospel, I suppose: Pardon of Sin, the Influences of the HOLY SPIRIT, and those other Privileges of *Christianity*; which constitute the present Happiness of Mankind, and prepare them for future Bliss.

Asp. You rightly judge.—And for whom were those royal, those heavenly Donatives received? If You have an Inclination to bestow a Sword set with Diamonds, a finely-wrought Piece of Plate, or an exquisitely finished Picture; what Names present themselves to your Thoughts? What Persons are the Ob-

tion. It denotes the most *audacious* and the most *flagitious* Impiety. It denotes that *Rebellion, which is as the Sin of Witchcraft; and that Stubbornness, which is as the Iniquity of Idolatry.* Yet, all virulent and execrable as it is, it does not suppress the Yearnings of divine Pity, nor supersede the Exercise of divine Forgiveness.—With a Word derived from the same Root, *Saul*, when exasperated almost to Madness, upbraids *Jonathan.* And we know, Persons so extremely incensed, never speak in the softest Terms; never touch the Subject with a Feather, but make their Tongue like a sharp Sword.

May I venture to add? That our Translators seem to mistake the proper Application of the afore-mentioned Passage. They represent *Saul*'s Invective, flying as *wide* of the Mark, as it is *overcharged* with Malice.—*Son of the perverse rebellious Woman!* This might be asserted, without the least Impeachment of *Jonathan*'s personal Loyalty.—Besides, is it not excessively indecent, as well as absolutely unreasonable, to reflect upon the Mother, for the Misdemeanours of the Son?—Surely, the Clause should be rendered, in perfect Consistence with the Genius of the Original; *Thou Son of perverse Rebellion*; or, more agreeably to the *English* Idiom, *Thou perverse rebellious Wretch!* 1 Sam. xx. 30.

jects of your Choice? The *approved* Friend, or *diſtinguiſhed* Favourite, I make no Queſtion.——But for *whom* (let me aſk again, ſince it is a Point of the laſt Importance) were thoſe heavenly Donatives received?

Ther. Let me recollect.—*Thou receiveſt Gifts.*—not for fallen Angels, but *for Men*—And not for thy Friends, but for thy *Enemies*—yea *for the Rebellious* alſo *.—Merciful Heaven! What a Word is this! And does it come from the GOD of Truth?—Gifts! Divine Gifts! Gifts of unſpeakable Value, and eternal Duration! And theſe to be conferred on Enemies, on the Rebellous! Wretches, who are deſtitute of all gracious Qualifications; who deſerve not the leaſt Favour; but have Reaſon to expect the Frowns of Indignation, and the Sword of Vengeance!

Aſp. Thus it is written, in thoſe ſacred Conſtitutions; which are far more ſtedfaſt and unalterable, than the Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*.——Thus it is ſpoken, by the Mouth of that Almighty BEING; with whom there is no Variableneſs, nor the leaſt Shadow of Turning.—Let us not, my dear Friend, by unreaſonable Unbelief, fruſtrate all theſe Promiſes, and reject *our own* Mercies. Let us not, by an evil Heart of Unbelief, make GOD a Lyar; and make Ourſelves, of all Creatures, moſt miſerable.

But ſee!—The Clouds which hung their agreeable Sable, to damp the Ardour, and abate the Glare of Day, are departing. The Sun has been colouring their fleecy Skirts, and ſpreading over the floating Screen a Variety of interchangeable Hues. Now He begins to edge them with Gold, and ſhine them into Silver. A ſure Indication, that (like the *glittering*, but *tranſitory* Toys, which they repreſent) they will ſoon be ſwept from the Horizon, and ſeen no more.——The bright Orb, while We are ſpeaking, burſts the Veil; and, from a voluminous Pomp of parting Clouds, pours a Flood of Splendor over all the Face of Nature.——We ſhall quickly perceive this

open

* Pſal. lxviii. 18.

open Situation, too hot to conſiſt with Pleaſure: and muſt be obliged to ſeek for Shelter, in the ſhady Apartments of the Houſe.

Will you admit me, *Theron*, into thoſe ſhady Apartments?

Ther. Admit You, *Aſpaſio?*—I am ſurpriſed at your Queſtion. I thought You had known me better: and am ſorry, it ſhould be needful to aſſure You, that my Houſe is as much your own, as it is mine. The more freely You command it, the more highly you will oblige me.

Aſp. May I believe You, *Theron?* Do you ſpeak from your Heart? Or muſt I conclude, that You, plauſibly profeſs, what You have no Intention to perform;—Would you be pleaſed, If I ſhould obſtinately perſiſt in theſe diſhonourable Suſpicions, notwithſtanding all your friendly Proteſtations?

Ther. My dear *Aſpaſio*, I ſee your Deſign. I ſee, and am aſhamed. Aſhamed to think, that I ſhould fancy myſelf more punctual in my Profeſſions, than GOD is true to his Word.——*LORD, I believe, Help Thou mine Unbelief!*

DIALOGUE XVI.

OUR Friends had agreed upon a Viſit to *Philemon*. They rode through a fine open, fruitful Country. Which was covered with Crops of ripened Corn; and occupied by ſeveral Parties of Ruſtics, gathering in the copious *Harveſt*.

The *Rye*, white and hoary as it were with Age, waved its bearded Billows, and gave a dry huſky Ruſtle before the Breeze.——The *Wheat*, laden with Plenty, and beautifully brown, hung the heavy Head; and invited, by its bending Poſture, the Reaper's Hand. Platts of *Barley*, and Acres of *Oats*, ſtood whitening in the Sun. Upright, and perfectly even,

as though the Gardener's Shears had clipped them at the Top, they gratified the Spectator's Eye, and gladdened the Farmer's Heart. — *Beans* partly clad in native Green, partly transformed and tawny with the parching Ray, were preparing the laſt Employ for the crooked Weapon.——Some of the Grain lay flat, in regular Rows, on the new made Stubble. Some was erected, in graceful Shocks, along the briſtly Ridges. Some, conveyed homewards on the loaded Waggon, nodded over the groaning Axle.

The Villages ſeemed to be empty, and all their Inhabitants poured into the Plains. Here were Perſons of each Sex, and of every Age.—The luſty *Youths*, ſtooping to their Work, plied the Sickle; or ſwept, with their Scythes, the falling Ranks.—The ſprightly *Females* followed, binding the Handfuls into Sheaves, or piling the Swarths into haſty Cocks.—Diſperſed up and down were the *Children* of the Needy, gleaning the ſcattered Ears, and picking their ſcanty Harveſt. —Nor were the *old* People abſent; but crawling into the Sun, or ſitting on a ſhady Eminence, they beheld the Toils—the pleaſing Toils they once ſuſtained.

This is the moſt joyful Period of the Countryman's Life; the long expected Crown of all his Labours. For this, He broke the ſtubborn Glebe, and manured the impoveriſhed Soil. For this, He bore the ſultry Beams of Summer, and ſhrunk not from the pinching Blaſts of Winter. For this, He toiled away the Year, in a Round of ceaſeleſs but willing Activity. Knowing, that the *Huſbandman muſt labour before he partakes of the Fruits* *.——And will not the bleſſed

* 2 *Tim.* ii. 6. *Beza* thinks, that in ſettling the Conſtruction of this Verſe, the Adverb πρῶτον ſhould be connected with the Participle κοπιῶντα. If ſo, the Tranſlation exhibited above, may bid fair for Acceptance; and, one of the moſt celebrated Hiſtorians, may have the Honour of commenting on the greateſt of the Apoſtles; *Næ illi falſi ſunt, qui diverſiſſimas Res expectant, Ignaviæ Voluptatem, & Præmia Virtutis.* SALLUST. *i. e.* They are, beyond all Diſpute, moſt egregiouſly miſtaken, who hope to unite thoſe incompatible Things, the Pleaſures of Indolence, and the Rewards of Induſtry.

bleſſed Hope of everlaſting Life; will not the bright Expectation of conſummate Bliſs, animate Us with an equally chearful Reſolution, both to reſiſt the Temptations, and diſcharge the Duties of our preſent State?

Short ſeemed the Way, and quick paſſed the Time, as they traveled through ſuch Scenes of rural Abundance, and rural Delight.—Before they were aware, the Horſes ſtoped at *Philenor*'s Seat. Where they found, to their no ſmall Diſappointment, that the Maſter was gone abroad. They alighted however, and took a Walk in the *Gardens*.

The Gardens, at proper Intervals, and in well-choſen Situations, were interſperſed with Pieces of *Statuary*. At the Turn of a Corner, You are—not ſhocked with a naked Gladiator, or a beaſtly *Priapus*—but agreeably ſurpriſed with the Image of *Tully*. He is juſt riſen from his Seat, and upon the Point of addreſſing Himſelf to ſome important Oration. A reverential Awe appears in his Countenance; ſuch as ſilently acknowledges, that He is going to plead before the Rulers of the World. Sedate, at the ſame time, and collected in Himſelf; He ſeems conſcious of ſuperior Eloquence, and emboldened by the Juſtice of his Cauſe. His thoughtful Aſpect, and gracefully expanded Arm, ſpeak to the Eye, before the Tongue, has uttered a Syllable.

You enter an Ally, lined on either Side with a verdant Fan; and having no Variety of Objects to diverſify the intermediate Space, your View is conducted to a magnificent Building at the End. As you walk along, contemplating the maſterly Performance in Architecture, an unexpected Opening diverts your Attention; and preſents you with ſome ſtriking Imitation of virtuous or heroic Life.——Not the *Macedonian* Madman; nor *Sweden*'s royal Knight errant; nor *Caſar*, infamouſly renowned for his ſlaughtered Millions: but the truly gallant *Czar*. A drawn Sword in his Hand, and a commanding majeſtic Sternneſs on his Brow. The Weapon is held in the moſt menacing Poſture; and many a Spectator has

been obſerved to ſtart back, with Apprehenſions of Fear. It is that glorioufly ſevere Attitude, in which the grateful Citizens of *Narva* beheld Him, and in which all Poſterity will admire Him; when He turned upon his own victorious, but ungovernable Troops; and threatened to drench the Dagger in their Hearts, if they did not immediately deſiſt from Rapine * and Slaughter; immediately allow Quarter to their vanquiſhed Foes.

Under a circular Dome, ſupported by Pillars of the *Doric* Order, and in a Spot where ſeveral Walks center, ſtands——not the *Venus a Medicis*; corrupting, while it captivates, the World—but a *Spartan* Mother. Her Habit decent and graceful; ſomewhat like the *Juno Matrona* of the *Romans*, as She is finely depictured in Mr. *Spence*'s *Polymetis*. Her Air ſtately and reſolved; expreſſive of Dignity, yet mingled with Softneſs. She holds a Shield: is in the Act of delivering it to her Son; a Youth, ſetting out for the Army, and going to hazard his Life, in the Defence of his Country. She is ſuppoſed to add that ſpirited and magnanimous Exhortation, which is engraven on the Protuberance of the Buckler —η ταν, η επι ταις — *Bring it back, my Son, as thy Trophy, or, be brought back upon it, as thy Bier.*

I am particularly pleaſed, ſaid *Theron*, with the Contrivance of this laſt Ornament. It is regulated by one of the moſt refined Rules of Art; not to laviſh away all the Beauty at a ſingle View, but to make a ſkilful Reſerve for ſome future Occaſion.——The Dome and the Columns afford Pleaſure, when beheld at a conſiderable Diſtance. The fine animated Figure in the midſt diſplays its Graces, on a nearer Approach. By which means, the Attention is kept awake, and the Entertainment continues new.

But

* "As ſoon as the Soldiers were Maſters of the Town, "(*Narva*) they fell to Plunder, and gave themſelves up to the "moſt enormous Barbarities. The *Czar* ran from Place, to "Place, to put a ſtop to the Diſorder and Maſſacre. He was "even obliged to kill with his own Hand ſeveral *Muſcovites*, "who did not hearken to his Orders.

VOLTAIRE's *Hiſt. Charl.* XII.

But what I principally admire, is the *Spirit* or *Style* of the Decorations in general. They put me in mind of a very juſt Remark, which Mr. *Pope* has ſomewhere made. It is, if I remember right, to this Effect.—— "A Man not only ſhews his Taſte, but his Virtue, "in the Choice of his Ornaments. A proper Piece "of Hiſtory, repreſented in Painting on a rich Man's "Walls, *(or exhibited in Imagery amidſt his Gardens)* "is very often a better Leſſon, than any He could "teach by his Converſation. In this Senſe, the "Stones may be ſaid to ſpeak, when Men cannot, "or will not."—All but the comparative or ſatyrical Part of the Obſervation, I would apply to the Proſpect before Us, and its worthy Owner.

Aſp. Philenor's Gardens are, I think, more chaſte and delicate in their Ornaments, than a certain *collegiate Church*. In the latter Place, we might reaſonably expect the ſtricteſt Adherence to Purity, if We ſhould not meet with the Symbols of Piety and Incitements to Religion ——What then would be the Reflections of a judicious Obſerver, if, in ſuch a ſolemn and venerable Edifice, He ſhould ſee a huge brawny Fellow ſtuck up againſt the Wall! with his Poſteriors half bare; his whole Body more than half naked; and in an Attitude none of the moſt decent*.——Excuſe

* Referring to the Monument, lately erected for MAJOR GENERAL FLEMING, in *Weſtminſter-Abbey*. Where, under the General's Buſt, are placed *Hercules* and *Pallas*. *Hercules* with his Club and Lion's Skin, in the Manner related above. *Pallas*, with a Mirror and a Serpent at her Side.——The Reader may ſee a Picture and an Explanation of this Monument, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for *Auguſt* 1754.

As this Church has been the Burial-place of the moſt illuſtrious Perſonages, for many Centuries; as it is the Place, where *all* our Kings receive their Crowns, and *many* of them depoſit their Aſhes; as it is ſingularly eminent for its Antiquities and Monuments; there is a large Reſort both of Natives and Foreigners, to view its grand and awful Curioſities. Whatever, therefore, is erected in a Place ſo circumſtanced and ſo diſtinguiſhed, ſhould, I apprehend, not only diſplay an Air of *Elegance* in the Execution, but include a *Beauty of Holineſs* in the Deſign. Becauſe, nothing can lay claim to the το καλον, which is not poſſeſſed of the το πρεπον.

Not

me, *Theron.* I confeſs myſelf aſhamed even to rehearſe the Deſcription. How then can the Spectacle itſelf become the Houſe of Divine Worſhip?

Ther. But perhaps this ſame brawny Fellow may repreſent a *Heathen* Demigod; one of the *Idols* worſhipped by Antiquity; the tutelary Deity of Valour.

Aſp. And will this Juſtify the Practice? Does not this add Profaneneſs to immodeſty? Are We *Chriſtians* to thank *Hercules* for the Valour of our Warriors, and make our Acknowledgments to *Pallas* for the Conduct of our Generals? Shall We *Chriſtians* behold with Admiration, or recognize as our Benefactors, what the Apoſtle has ſtigmatized under the Character of *Devils* *?

If HE, who overthrew the Tables of the Money changers, had taken a Walk in theſe famous Cloyſters, I am apt to ſuſpect, He would have paid no very agreeable Compliment to this fine Piece of Statuary. *Take theſe Things hence*, would probably have been his Command; and, *make not the Precincts of your Temple a Chamber of* Pagan *Imagery*, his Rebuke †.—Neither is it at all unlikely, that the Image itſelf, notwithſtanding its inimitable Workmanſhip, might have ſhared the Fate of its Kinſman *Dagon*;

——————When the captive Ark
Maim'd his brute Image, Head and Hands lopp'd off
In his own Temple, on the Groundſell Edge
When He fell flat, and ſham'd his Worſhippers ‡.

Ther.

Nor can any Performances, thus ſituated, be pronounced truly graceful, but ſuch only as correſpond with the Character, and ſubſerve the Deſign of the ſacred Edifice. It was thought, by a very able Critic and a very candid Writer, that *mere Impropriety* of Taſte, in ornamenting one of the Monuments, called for his Cenſure. Surely then a Violation of *Decency*, and an Approach to *Paganiſm*, call more loudly for public Animadverſion, and proper Reformation. See *Spect.* Vol. I. No. 26.

* 1 Cor. x. 20. † John ii. 16.

‡ MILTON B. I. 458.

Ther. But how ſhould the Artiſt repreſent the great Atchievements and the ſhining Qualities of his Hero, if You will not allow Him to make uſe of theſe *ſignificant* Emblems?

Aſp. I queſtion, whether they are ſo very ſignificant. The Mirror ſeems to characterize a Fop, rather than a Soldier. It leads Us to think of a ſoft *Narciſſus*, admiring Himſelf; rather than a Sagacious General, planning the Operations of the Campaign.——Beſides; is ſacred Literature ſo deſtitute of proper Emblems, that We muſt borrow the Decorations of our Churches and the Trophies of our Conquerors, from the Dreams of Superſtition or the Deluſions of Idolatry? How juſt and expreſſive are thoſe emblematical Repreſentations, exhibited in *Ezekiel*'s Viſion! Where Activity and Speed are ſignified, by *Hands* in Conjunction with *Wings*; and the deep, the complicated, yet ever harmonious Schemes of Providence, by *a Wheel in the Middle of a Wheel*. With what Propriety and Force are the nobleſt Endowments pictured, in the Revelations of St. *John*, and their grand Machinery! Superior Wiſdom and Benevolence of Heart, are deſcribed by the Face of *a Man*; Strength of Mind and Intrepidity of Spirit, by the Viſage of *a Lion*; Calmneſs of Temper and indefatigable Application, by the Features of *an Ox*; a penetrating Diſcernment, and an expeditious Habit of acting, by the Form of *a flying Eagle* *.

Theſe Hieroglyphics are graceful, are pertinent, and ſuch as every Spectator will underſtand. Whereas, the Devices of our new monumental Encomium are, I preſume, to the Unlearned hardly intelligible; to the Serious, little better than profane; and to every Beholder, indelicate if not immodeſt.——*Philenor*, I imagine, would bluſh to admit them into his Walks or Avenues. And I am ſorry to find them received into the moſt antient †, moſt renowned, and moſt frequented Church in the Kingdom.

* Rev. iv. 7.

† Some Antiquarians trace back the Origin of this Church, even to the Reign of *Lucius*; which is more than the Space of

Talking in this Manner, they come to a curious Grove, formed on that uncommon Plan, propoſed by Mr. *Addiſon*, in one of his *Spectators*.—It conſiſted wholly of *Evergreens*. *Firrs*, clad in verdant Silver, pointed their reſinous leaves, and ſhot aloft their towering Cones. *Laurels* arrayed in gloſſy Green, ſpread their ample Foliage, and threw abroad their rambling Boughs.—*Bay-trees* were expanded into a Fan, that no Weather could tarniſh, or rounded into a Column, that knew not how to moulder. While the *Lauruſtinus* ran out into a beautiful Irregularity of Shape: and compacted her reddening Gems, in order to unfold her whitening Bloom.——In one Place lay a Dale, gently ſinking, and coated with the *Chamomile*'s natural Frieze; which never changes its Colour, never loſes its Gloſs. Near it, and ſcooped, You would imagine, from the ſame Hollow, aroſe a Mount, ſoftly ſwelling, and ſhagged with *Furz*; gay with perennial Verdure, and generally decked with golden Bloſſoms. —Here, You are led through a ſerpentine Walk, and Hedges of *Box*; and find, perhaps, a ſolitary Pyramid or a capacious Urn, each compoſed of unfading *Yew*. There you look through a ſtrait Alley, fenced on either Side, and arched over Head, with mantling *Philirea*; and ſee, at the Extremity, an Obeliſk ſheathed in *Ivy*, and ornamented with its ſable Cluſters, as with Wreaths of living Sculpture.—Scattered up and down, were ſeveral Sorts of *Holly*; ſome ſtriped with White; ſome ſpotted with Yellow; ſome preparing to brighten and beautify the Scene, with Berries of glowing Scarlet.

The Heads of the Trees, ariſing one above another, in a gradual Slope, from the diminutive Mazerean to the lofty Cypreſs; and ſeveral Shadings of their green Attire, greatly diverſified, and judiciouſly intermixed; afford, eſpecially in the Winter-ſeaſon, a moſt

of 1500 Years. Others ſuppoſe, that *Sebert*, King of the *Eaſt-Saxons*, about the Year of our LORD 605, built the firſt religious Structure on this Spot. All agree, that it was re-edified and inlarged by *Edward* the *Confeſſor*; and that the preſent ſtately and magnificent Fabric, was founded by *Henry* III.

a moſt *inlivened* and *lovely* Proſpect.—As the Sunſhine is, by the Frequenters of this Grove, uſually more coveted than the Shade; it is ſo diſpoſed, as to admit, in one Part or another, every Gleam of fine Weather, which exhilarates the Winter.

Aſp. There muſt be ſomething unſpeakably pleaſing in a Plantation, which appears lively and fruitful, when all its Neighbours of the wood-land Race, are barren, bleak, or dead. But, how much more chearing and delightful muſt it be; when *decrepit* Age, or bodily Infirmities, have impaired the Vigour, and laid waſte the Gratifications of our youthful Prime; to find a ſolid *undecaying* Pleaſure, in the Favour of GOD, and the Hope of Glory?—Now indeed the feathered Tribes reſort to the more flowing Umbrage of the Poplar and the Aſh. But amidſt *December*'s Cold, You ſhall obſerve them forſaking the *leafleſs* Woods, and flocking to this friendly Receptacle; hopping acroſs the ſunny Walks, or ſheltering themſelves, in the wet and ſtormy Day, under theſe *truſty* Boughs. So, the many thoughtleſs Creatures, who turn their Back upon Religion, amidſt the ſoft and ſoothing Careſſes of Proſperity; will want, extremely want, its *ſovereign Supports*, under the ſharp and diſtreſſing Aſſaults of Adverſity, Sickneſs and Death. —This Collection, it is true, may not equal the Groves of annual Verdure, in Floridity of Dreſs; but it far exceeds them, in the Duration of its Ornaments. Ere long, yonder ſhewy Branches, will be ſtript of their Holiday Cloaths: whereas, *thoſe* will retain thir Honours, when *theſe* are all Rags or Nakedneſs. Thus will it be with every Refuge for our poor, imperfect, ſinful Souls; excepting only the Reighteouſneſs of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Every Thing elſe will *fade as a Leaf**. This, my *Theron*, and this alone is an *Evergreen:* always free for our Acceptance, and always effectual to ſave.

Ther. An Evergreen it is. But like the ruddy and inviting Fruits, which hang on the uppermoſt Boughs of

* Iſai. lxiv, 6.

of thoſe lofty Trees in the Orchard, it ſeems to be quite out of my Reach.

Aſp. Are You ſenſible, That You *need*, the immaculate and perfect Righteouſneſs of our SAVIOUR?

Ther. Was *Jonah* ſenſible, how much He needed the cooling Shelter of his Gourd; when the Sun ſmote fiercely upon his Temples, and all the Fervours of the fiery Eaſt were glowing around Him?——So is your *Theron* ſenſible, that, without a far better Righteouſneſs than his own, He muſt inevitably be condemned by the Sentence of the Law, and cannot poſſibly ſtand before the high and holy GOD.

Aſp. Remember then, what our LORD ſays to ſuch Perſons; *Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give You Reſt* *. How *gracious* is the Invitation! Come unto ME, the Father of Compaſſions, and the Giver of every good Gift.—How extenſive, as well as gracious! All that are *weary* †, toiling in a fruitleſs Purſuit of Happineſs, and ſpending your Labour for that which ſatisfieth not. All that are *heavy laden* ‡, oppreſſed with the Servitude of Sin, or bowed down under a Load of Miſery.—Theſe, *all* theſe, are called; and *You*, my Friend, in the Number.——They have not a Ticket, a Bond, or ſome inferior Pledge, to aſcertain their Succeſs; but they have a Promiſe from Faithfulneſs and Truth itſelf. *I will give you Reſt*, ſays the Strength of Iſrael; whoſe Will is Fate, and his Word the Baſis of the Univerſe——And if *CHRIST* will give You Reſt; He will waſh You in that Blood, which atones; and inveſt You with that Righteouſneſs, which juſtifies. Since nothing ſhort of theſe Mercies, can afford any Satisfaction to the guilty Conſcience, or *true* Satisfaction to the reſtleſs Soul,—Permit me to aſk farther; Do You earneſtly *deſire* this Righteouſneſs?

* Matt. xi. 28.

† Κοπιωντες ‡ Πεφορτισμενοι.

Ther.

Ther. Will yonder *Hirelings*, when fatigued with the Heat and Burden of a long, laborious, ſultry Day, deſire the Shades of the Evening, and the Repoſe of the Night? — I can truly, on this Occaſion, adopt the Words of the Prophet; *The Deſire of my Soul is to thy Name*, Bleſſed JESUS, *and to the Remembrance* of thy Righteouſneſs. The very Mention of this ſpotleſs Righteouſneſs is Muſic to my Ears. Every freſh, though diſtant Diſcovery of it, gleams Pleaſure upon my Mind. And that would be a welcome Day, a Day greatly to be diſtinguiſhed, which ſhould bring it *near* to my View, and *home* to my Soul.

Aſp. Say not then, my dear Friend, that *CHRIST*, and the Bleſſings of his Purchaſe, are beyond your Reach. They are now, even now at your Door. You need not argue, anxiouſly and deſpondingly; *Who ſhall aſcend into Heaven, to bring down CHRIST from above?* Or, *who ſhall deſcend into the Deep, to bring up CHRIST from beneath* *? There is no ſuch Impoſſibility, no ſuch Difficulty in the Thing. *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs, *CHRIST* and his Salvation, are brought nigh in the Word of Promiſe. And *if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth the LORD JESUS*, as dying on the Croſs for thy Redemption: *if thou ſhalt believe in thy Heart, that GOD hath raiſed Him from the dead* for thy Juſtification, *thou ſhalt be ſaved* †. In ſo doing, thou ſhalt receive Remiſſion of Sin, and Power to withſtand its Temptations.

Have You never, in your Travels, been overtaken by the dark and tempeſtuous Night? When, chilled with the Cold, and almoſt drowned in the Rain, You arrived at the Houſe of ſome valued Friend, were You not willing to gain Admittance?

Ther. Willing! I was deſirous; I was almoſt impatient; I thought every Moment an Hour, 'till the hoſpitable Door opened: 'till I exchanged the diſmal Gloom and the driving Storm, for the chearful Light and the amiable Company within.

Aſp.

* Rom. x. 6, 7. † Rom. x. 9.

Asp. The adored IMMANUEL professes Himself equally willing to come unto You. *Behold!* says the SAVIOUR of the World, *I stand at the Door, and knock. If any Man hear my Voice, and open the* DOOR, *I will come in unto Him, and will sup with Him, and He with ME* *. —— Like one exposed to all the Inclemencies of the Air, whose *Head is filled with Dew, and his Locks with the Drops of the Night* †, He is not only willing, but *desirous* to enter. — *He stands at the Door*, with great Long suffering and Perseverance; till all Obstacles are removed, or rather till that one grand Obstacle is taken out of the Way, Unbelief —— *He knocks*, by the Preaching of his Word, and the Promise of his Gospel; like One who solicits Admission, and will take no Denial. — Hear then his soliciting Voice, and *He will sup with You*; will make his Abode with You, will manifest his Glories in You, and communicate his Grace to You. Believe his promising Word, and *You shall sup with Him*; this will be refreshing to your distressed Soul, as the most sumptuous Banquet to the famished Stomach and craving Appetite.

Ther. I cannot open my Heart.

Asp. CHRIST has the Key of *David. He openeth, and None can shut; He shutteth, and None can open* ‡. —— HE is able to make all Grace, not only to exist in You, but *abound* towards You §. —— And, what is still more encouraging, He is professedly the *Author* and *Finisher* of our Faith ‖. Since He has claimed this Character to Himself, since He has undertaken to execute this Office, why should We harbour the least Distrust? Will HE not fulfil his own Office, and act agreeably to his own Character? —— Be not, my dear *Theron*, be not faithless, but believing.

Ther. This I believe — That I am a lost Sinner; under the Curse of the Law, and liable to the Wrath of GOD. That there is no Relief for my Distress, but

* Rev. iii. 20. † Cant. v. 2. ‡ Rev. iii. 7.
§ 2 Cor. ix. ‖ Heb. xii. 2.

but in *CHRIST* and his tranſcendent Merits. HE, and He *alone*, is able to ſave me from my Guilt, and all its diſmal Train of Miſeries. He is a SAVIOUR fully proportioned to my Wants; exactly ſuited to my ſeveral Neceſſities.—I believe, and am perſuaded, That, if I was intereſted in the Divine *JESUS*, my Soul ſhould live.

Aſp. Be perſuaded likewiſe, That there is no *clogging* Qualification, no Worth to be poſſeſſed, no Duty to be performed, in order to your full Participation of *CHRIST* and his Riches. Only believe, and they are all your own. *CHRIST dwelleth in our Hearts*,—How? By legal Works, and laborious Prerequiſites? No; but *by Faith* *. *He that believeth on the SON, hath*—a chimerical? far from it; a real and a ſubſtantial Happineſs; even *everlaſting Life* †.

Ther. Ah! my *Aſpaſio!* I cannot believe. I feel my Impotency. My Mind is, as You formerly hinted, like the withered Arm.

Aſp. It is no ſmall Advantage, *Theron*, to be convinced of our Inability in this Reſpect. This is, if not the Beginning of Faith, the Sign of its Approach; and ſhews it to be, if not in the Soul, yet at the very Door.——Fear not, my Friend. He who bids You ſtretch out, will ſtrengthen the withered Arm. He firſt makes Us ſenſible of our Weakneſs, and then *fulfils all the good Pleaſure of his Will, and the Work of Faith with Power* ‡.

Can You doubt of his Willingneſs? Then go to Mount *Calvary*. *There* liſten to *the Sounding of his Bowels, and of his Mercies towards You* ‖. Has not every Drop of Blood a Tongue? Cannot you read a Language in each ſtreaming Wound, and hear a Voice in every dying Pang?—Do they not all ſpeak his infinite Love even to wretched Sinners? Do they not all addreſs You with that tender Remonſtrance, *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore doſt thou doubt* §? Nay; do they not all declare, with an Energy ſuperior

* Eph. iii. 17. † John iii. 36. ‡ 2 Theſſ. i. 11.
‖ Iſai. lxiii. 15. § Matt. xiv. 31.

rior to the Force of Words, That he will deny You no Manner of Thing that is good?

Who gave his Blood, what Gift will he with-hold!

Ther. I am aſhamed to recollect what miſtaken Notions I once entertained, concerning the *Eaſineſs* of Believing. As though it were to be performed, like the Act of riſing from our Seat, or ſtepping into a Coach, by our own Strength, and at our own Time. What a Stranger was I then, to the Blindneſs of my Underſtanding, and the Hardneſs of my Heart; to my Bondage under Unbelief, and Averſeneſs to the Way of Salvation *by Grace through Faith!*

Aſp. Since you are ſenſible of your Impotence, beware of the *contrary* Extreme. Becauſe You cannot, by your own Strength, exerciſe Faith, let not this occaſion a tame Reſignation of Yourſelf to Infidelity. You muſt endeavour, diligently endeavour, to believe; and wait, and pray, for the Divine SPIRIT. Though it is his Office to teſtify of *CHRIST, and bring near the REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs* *: Yet his Influences are not to ſuperſede, but to encourage our own Efforts. — *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*; here is our Duty. *For it is GOD that worketh in you both to will and to do* †; here is our Encouragement. And O! what a glorious Encouragement, to have the Arm of Omnipotence ſtretched out, for our Support and our Succour!

Ther. How, or in what Manner, does the Divine SPIRIT work Faith in the Heart of a Sinner? You wonder, perhaps, that I aſk ſuch a Queſtion. But my Apprehenſions are ſtrangely dull, and my Views very dim, with regard to ſpiritual Things. If, in this Reſpect, I have any Sight, it is like his, who *ſaw Men as Trees walking*; ſaw theſe ſeveral Objects, but ſo obſcurely, ſo confuſedly, that He could not diſtinguiſh one from the other, only by the Circumſtance of Motion.

Aſp.

* Iſai. xlvi. 1, [illegible] † Phil. ii. 12, 13.

Asp. The most inlightened Minds see only in part; and all have Reason, to make the blind Beggar's Supplication, their own Request; *LORD, that I may receive my Sight!* —— The Operation of the Holy SPIRIT in producing Faith, is thus described by a Master in *Israel*; "The Divine SPIRIT brings "*CHRIST* and his Righteousness nigh unto Us in "the Promise of the Gospel; clearing at the same "Time our Right and Warrant to intermeddle with "all, without Fear of vicious Intromission; encou-"raging and enabling to a Measure of confident Ap-"plication, and taking Home all to Ourselves, freely, "without Money, and without Price."

You was once, *Theron*, a zealous Advocate for good Works Now You seem to have abandoned your Clients. Remember, my dear Friend, what our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, says; *This is the Work of GOD*, of all Works most acceptable and most honourable to the Divine MAJESTY, *that You believe on Him, whom He hath sent* *.

Ther. The true Belief, according to your Notion, *Aspasio*, is so refined and exalted a Virtue, that I very much question, whether I shall ever be able to attain it.

Asp. If you are unable to attain it, is the LORD unable to give it? *Our Sufficiency* for this and every good Work, is not in Ourselves, but in GOD. And to Him Difficulties are easy. Before Him Mountains are a Plain.—You will please to remember, that Sinners are said to *believe*, not through their own Ability, but through the Power of *Grace*. And you will permit me to ask, How you became acquainted with *my* Notion of Faith!

Ther. I am not so inattentive a Reader of your Letters, as to forget your Definition of this momentous Article. *Faith*, you say, is "A real Persuasion †, "that

* John vi. 29.

† *Budæus* and *Stephens* derive the original Word from πειθεσθαι, He is persuaded: and, I think, very properly: for, whatever We believe, of that We have a real Persuasion.—The latter most accurate and masterly Critic gives this Interpretation of πιστις. *Persuasio*

" that the bleſſed *JESUS* has ſhed his Blood *for* " *me*, and fulfilled all Righteouſneſs in *my Stead:* " that through this great Atonement and glorious " Obedience, He has purchaſed even for *my* ſinful " Soul, Reconciliation with GOD, ſanctifying Grace, " and all ſpiritual Bleſſings *."

Aſp. I am obliged to you, *Theron*, for the Honour You do my Letter; and I hope, You will pay an equal Regard to the Determination of our Church. You once apprehended, that my Attachment to the Church of *England* was unſettled and wavering. Judge now, who has moſt thoroughly imbibed her Doctrines, and is moſt invariably tenacious of her true Intereſts.—— In the firſt Part of the Homily concerning the Sacrament, We have this Definition of Faith; " It is a " Belief, not only that the Death of *CHRIST* is " available for the Remiſſion of Sins, and Reconcilia- " tion with GOD, but alſo that He made a full and " ſufficient Sacrifice *for thee*, a perfect Cleanſing *for* " *thy Sins* †."

My Notion of Faith, You ſee, is evidently the Voice of the Eſtabliſhment; and, I think it gives Us a *clear intelligible* Senſe, ſuited to the moſt common Acceptation of the Word. Such as would naturally ariſe in the Mind of a Stranger, who, without any Bias on

Perſuaſio certa, quam in nobis efficit Spiritus Sanctus, de Salute in Chriſto promiſſa, quam ſibi quiſque credendo applicat. To corroborate which Expoſition, He adds; *Hac etiam in Significatione Nomen Fidei a Theologis Latinis receptum fuit.*

* See *Letter* X. Here is, it muſt be acknowledged, a total Omiſſion of all *preparatory* or rather *impulſive* Diſpoſitions; ſuch as Conviction of Sin, and Hungering after Salvation.---Here is likewiſe a total Silence concerning all Cauſes, *inſtrumental* or *efficient*; ſuch as the Power of the Divine WORD, and the Agency of the Divine SPIRIT.---No mention is made of the *Fruits* or *Concomitants*; ſuch as Love to *CHRIST*, Love of the Brethren, or Purity of Heart.---Nothing is exhibited to View, but the Form and Eſſence of Faith; or that particular Act, which *characterizes* and *conſtitutes* real Faith; which diſtinguiſhes it from the hypocritical Pretenſion, and the hiſtorical Notion.---This ſimple View is given, that the Mind may fix upon the grand Point, and not be embarraſſed with a Multiplicity of Ideas.

† Anſwerable to this, was the Doctrine of the *primitive Church*; Η πιστις ιδιοποιησις του Θεου. Chryſoſt.

on his Judgment, ſhould inquire into the Purport of our Religion, or conſider the Language of our Bible.

Ther. How ſuited to the moſt *common Acceptation* of the Word?

Aſp. When You ſent a Meſſage to your Tenant—who, in his laſt Sickneſs expreſſed ſo much Uneaſineſs on account of his numerous Family, and embarraſſed Circumſtances—aſſuring Him, that you had cancelled the Bond, and forgiven his Debt. When You told the poor Woman—whoſe Huſband fell from the loaded Waggon, and broke both his Legs—that you would order a Surgeon to attend Him, and would continue his weekly Pay. *How* did they regard, *how* receive your promiſed Kindneſs? *So* let Us credit the gracious Declarations of our GOD; *ſo* accept his faithful Promiſe; and then we ſhall anſwer the Import of the Word—then we ſhall truly *believe.*

Ther Where is there, in Scripture, any Thing parallel or ſimilar to theſe Inſtances?

Aſp. Have You never read the Words of *Micah*; *Who is a GOD like unto Thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by Tranſgreſſion* *? Here is the gracious Declaration. —— *He will turn again*; *He will have Compaſſion upon Us*; *He will ſubdue our Iniquities* †. Here is the faithful Promiſe.—And why, my Friend, why ſhould We pay leſs Credit to the ever living JEHOVAH, than to a Man "whoſe Breath is "in his Noſtrils?" Is there Treachery with the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael?* Does the LORD make, and then violate his Promiſe? "Aſk now of the "Days that are paſt, aſk from the one Side of Hea-"ven unto the other, whether ſuch a Thing hath "ever been?"

Ther. GOD has never violated his Promiſe, when it was expreſly made, and particularly applied. But, in this Circumſtance, there is a wide Difference between the Caſe of your Friend, and the Caſe of his poor People. I *named* the Object of my Compaſſion in one of the Inſtances, and made a *perſonal* Application in the other. Neither of which is done in the Scriptures.

Aſp.

* Mic. vii. 18. † Mic. vii. 19.

Asp. Though We are not particularly named, yet We are very exactly described, by our *Family*, our *Inclination*, our *Practice*. — What says eternal Wisdom, when she makes a Tender of her inestimable Blessings? *To You, O Men*, not to fallen Angels, *I call*; *and my Voice is* not to this Man or that Man exclusively, but *to the Sons of Men* indefinitely *. —— What says the holy Apostle, when He publishes the Counsels of Heaven? *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the World to save*—the Upright? the Unblameable? Was this the Case, our Hopes would be covered with a Cloud; or rather, totally and finally eclipsed. But see! they are clear as the Light, and conspicuous as the Noon-Day. For He came (chearing, charming Word!) He came to save *Sinners* †.

Consonant to all which, is the Declaration of another sacred Envoy. *He*, the PRINCE of Peace, the MONARCH of the Universe, *suffered* — for whom? They, in whose Behalf this matchless Ransom was paid, must have an undeniable Right, to look upon Redemption as their own. And blessed, for ever blessed be GOD, it is most peremptorily said, He suffered *for the Unjust* ‡.

That no Part of our Character might be omitted, and no Sort of our Misery pass unrelieved, it is farther declared; *When We were without Strength, CHRIST died for the Ungodly* §. When we were ungodly, and considered only as ungodly Creatures; neither possessed of any Thing amiable, nor having the least Ability to acquire it; nay, when We were chargeable with horrid Guilt, and incapable of expiating a single Offence; then, even then, *CHRIST* died, and for such abominable Wretches he died. — Are We not of the *human* Family? Are We not *unjust* || towards our Fellow-creatures, and *ungodly* towards

* Prov. viii. 4. † 1 Tim. i. 15. ‡ 1 Pet. iii. 18.
§ Rom. v. 6.

|| *He* is unjust towards his Neighbour, who neglects to love his Neighbour as *himself*. And if this is the Standard, who has not fallen short?

wards our great CREATOR? Are We not, in all Relations and in every Reſpect, *Sinners?* If We are (and upon theſe Queſtions Incredulity itſelf will ſcarcely demur) let Us not frowardly reject, rather let Us thankfully receive thoſe ſpiritual Treaſures, which, by virtue of the aforecited Conveyance, belong to *ſuch* People: which, by ſeveral other Clauſes in the Will and Teſtament of our crucified LORD, evidently devolve to *ſuch* Perſons.

Ther. Is it poſſible, *Aſpaſio?* Can We be warranted and encouraged to receive theſe Treaſures, in a Capacity and under a Denomination, which I ſhould think more likely to exclude Us; diſinherit Us; and overthrow all our Pretenſions?

Aſp. This may ſeem ſtrange, but it is true. All the Bleſſings of the Goſpel proceed upon a Suppoſition of Sinfulneſs. *CHRIST* is made *Wiſdom* unto his People; but what Occaſion for the Acceſſion of Wiſdom, unleſs it be in the Caſe of Ignorance and Folly? *CHRIST* is made *Righteouſneſs*; but who can ſtand in need of a juſtifying Righteouſneſs, if they are not in themſelves unprofitable and guilty? *CHRIST* is made *Sanctification*; and does not this imply a State of Corruption to be remedied, a Body of Sin to be deſtroyed? *CHRIST* is made *Redemption*; and from what are Perſons redeemed, but from Chains and Bondage, from Miſery and Ruin, from all Manner of Evil?

It is alſo a moſt precious and invaluable Truth. Such as I would hold faſt, and never, never let go. When I ſearch for my own Endowments, I find nothing that I dare venture to plead. Being, in my beſt Moments, and amidſt my choiceſt Duties, a Sinner. As this is, at all Times, my undoubted Character, I have at all Times, an undoubted Warrant to ſay, The Uncreated WISDOM *calleth me:* the Bleſſed *JESUS* came *to ſave me:* the Great MESSIAH ſuffered Death *for me.*

Let me illuſtrate the Point. — *Romulus*, You know, the Founder of the *Roman* Empire, was a poor Prince: had but a Handful of Subjects, and very ſcanty Territories. What Expedient could He deviſe, to in-

large

large the Boundaries of the one, and augment the Number of the other? He iſſued a Proclamation, addreſſed to Outlaws and Criminals; all that were involved in Debt, or obnoxious to Puniſhment. Promiſing, that as many as would ſettle under his Dominion, ſhould be ſecured from Proſecution, and veſted with conſiderable Privileges.—We will ſuppoſe a Perſon in thoſe diſtreſſed Circumſtances. Upon hearing the welcome Invitation, He hangs down his Head, and with a dejected Air, cries; "I am a *Debtor*, I "am a *Criminal*, and therefore unworthy of the royal "Protection." What Anſwer ſhould be made to ſuch a diſpirited Complainer? Make the ſame to Yourſelf, whenever You are inclined to renew the preſent Objections.—Remembering, that the infinite and eternal SOVEREIGN, to diſplay the Magnificence of his Majeſty, and manifeſt the Riches of his Goodneſs, has commiſſioned his Ambaſſadors to publiſh in every Nation under Heaven. —— "That all unhappy Sin"ners, who are *oppreſſed* by the Devil and liable to "Damnation, may come to *CHRIST*, and rely "on *CHRIST*. May, in this Manner, obtain Par"don, Righteouſneſs, and all the Privileges of Chil"dren."

Ther. At this rate, the *vileſt Miſcreants* have as clear, nay have the very ſame Warrant to believe in *CHRIST*, and receive his Salvation, as the higheſt Saints.

Aſp. The very ſame. In this Reſpect there is no Difference. All have ſinned, and muſt ſue for ſpiritual Bleſſings, not as deſerving, but as *guilty* Creatures; muſt receive them, not as the Recompence of their own Worth, but as the Iſſues of infinite Mercy. —The vileſt Miſcreants are blinded by the Devil, and enſlaved to their Luſts. Therefore they ſee no Beauty in a SAVIOUR, that they ſhould deſire Him. Whereas, when the Divine SPIRIT opens their Eyes, and inclines their Hearts, they diſcover and make uſe of juſt the ſame Right to *CHRIST* and his Merit, as the higheſt Saints. A Right founded, not on their awakened Deſires, not on any Thing in themſelves,

ſelves, but purely, ſolely, intirely on the free Grant of a SAVIOUR.

Should You aſk the higheſt Saints, On what their Hopes are grounded? This, or ſomething to this Effect, would be their Reply — "On the free Exhibition of *CHRIST* and his Salvation, recorded in the Word of Truth. There we find it written, "*To You*, though Gentiles and Idolaters, *is preached* "*the Remiſſion of Sins* *: — *The Promiſe is to You*, even "to You, *whoſe wicked Hands have crucified and ſlain* "*the LORD of Life*; *and* not to You only, but "*to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD* "*our GOD*, by the Meſſage of his everlaſting Goſpel, *ſhall call* †. — We remember, *Theron*, though "You ſeem to have forgotten, the wretched Outcaſt, "*polluted* in its Blood, yet accepted by the HOLY "ONE of *Iſrael*. We remember the heavenly Gifts, "received by the triumphant REDEEMER for "Enemies, and for the *Rebellious*. Nor can we eaſily "forget the Promiſe of Forgiveneſs which was made, "and the Bleſſing of Forgiveneſs which was vouchſafed, even to the *Murderers* of the LORD of "Glory ‡.

Ther. This is a pleaſing Suppoſition. But it would be more ſatisfactory, if You ſhould produce any of the Saints ſpeaking in this Manner.

Aſp. Iſaiah, You will allow, was a Saint of no inferior Rank. Yet He breathes the Spirit I am deſcribing, and acts the Part I am vindicating. Turn to that Epitome of the Goſpel, his *fifty-third* Chapter. There You may obſerve Him, claiming a Share in the greateſt of all Privileges, Salvation through the Blood of

* Acts xiii. 38.

† *Acts* ii. 39. *Call* — in the ſame Manner, as He called Thoſe, to whom *Peter* ſpake. Which evidently means, not the inward efficacious Call, wrought by the SPIRIT; but the outward Call, delivered in the Word. Otherwiſe, We muſt ſuppoſe every individual Perſon, in this promiſcuous Aſſembly, to be ſavingly changed. Which will hardly be credited by Thoſe, who remember, that the Congregation conſiſted of Mockers, Murderers, and Sinners.

‡ Referring to *Dialogue* XV.

of *CHRIST*. How does He advance and maintain his Claim? Not in the Capacity of a *ſanctified*, but under the Character of a *ſinful* Perſon. Theſe are his Words; *The LORD hath laid on him*, on his Son *CHRIST JESUS*, *the Iniquity of Us all**. Of me, and of my Brethren in Piety, does He mean? No; but of me, and of my Fellow tranſgreſſors. This is evidently implied in the Clauſe I have quoted. In the preceding Part of the Verſe, the Prophet explains Himſelf, and leaves no Room for Heſitation. *All We, like Sheep, have gone aſtray; We have turned every One to his own Ways*; yet *our* Tranſgreſſions, *our* Iniquities, the GOD of all Mercy has tranſferred from us, and charged upon our REDEEMER — As the vileſt Miſcreants are indiſpenſibly obliged to confeſs the former, they have a free and full Right to profeſs, to aſſert, and to believe the latter.

At this You may probably wonder: at this We ought all to wonder: this is that amazingly rich Grace, which will be the Wonder of Saints and Angels through a boundleſs Eternity — Yet, though We wonder, let us not murmur. Let not the elder Brother repine, becauſe the young Prodigal enters at the ſame Door, and is admitted to the ſame Table with Himſelf.

To this Teſtimony of the Saints, ſhall I add the Deciſion of their King? *GOD ſo loved the World*, even the fallen, the wicked, the apoſtate World; *that*, in the Fulneſs of Time, *He gave his only begotten SON*†, to bring in a perfect Righteouſneſs, and obtain eternal Redemption And He ſtill gives Him, with all his ſaving Benefits, in the Promiſe of the Goſpel.

Ther. Does this general Gift warrant a Sinner, to make a particular Application of all to Himſelf?

Aſp It warrants, it demands, and in other Inſtances obtains, a particular Application. When *Jonah*, in purſuance of the divine Command, *cried and ſaid, Yet forty Days, and Nineveh ſhall be overthrown.* Here was

* Iſai. liii. 6. † John iii. 16.

was no particular Mention of Man, Woman, or Child. Neither the King, nor the Nobles, nor the Commons were ſpecified. Much leſs was each and every Inhabitant threatened by Name. Nevertheleſs, this general Denunciation alarmed them all; was influential on them all. Inſomuch that *the People of Nineveh believed GOD, and proclaimed a Faſt, and put on Sackcloth, from the greateſt of them even to the leaſt* * — *They believed*; hence We learn the true Nature of Believing; "GOD ſpeaks to *me*; and what he ſpeaks, "He will perform;" is its genuine Profeſſion. Hence We likewiſe diſcover, *who* they are which ought in this Manner to apply the general Word; *all, from the leaſt even unto the greateſt, believed.*

Ther. The Caſe is not parallel, *Aſpaſio.* This was a Denunciation of Vengeance, not a Promiſe of Grace.

Aſp. And can You ſuppoſe, that GOD is more liberal of Vengeance, than He is communicative of Grace? Vengeance is his ſtrange Work, but in Mercy and Loving-kindneſs He delighteth. — Are we bound to believe and apply his dreadful Threatenings? Not allowed to believe and apply his precious Promiſes? Surely, the LORD's Ways are not ſo unequal. — When the Law ſays, *Curſed is every One, that continueth not in all Things* †; ſhould not every Hearer take this to Himſelf, and ſubmit to the Sentence of juſt Condemnation? When the Goſpel ſays, *HE came to ſave that which is loſt* ‡; ſhould not every Hearer take this alſo to himſelf, and embrace the Tender of free Salvation?

However, if You diſlike my Inſtance, I will give You another; which is not of the vindictive, but of the beneficent Kind. — When the *Manna* made its firſt Appearance in the Wilderneſs; when the *Iſraelites* knew, neither what it was, nor for whom intended; both theſe Particulars were explained by *Moſes*. *This is the Bread which the LORD hath given You to eat* ‖.

* Jonah iii. 5.
† Gal. iii. 10.
‡ Matt. xviii. 11.
‖ Exod. xvi. 15.

No Mention is made of any individual Perſon. Yet the whole Congregation, looked upon this as an undoubted Permiſſion, both for themſelves and their Children, to gather, to fetch home, and to uſe the miraculous Food.—And here, *Theron*, here lies the principal Difference between the vile Miſcreant, and the exalted Saint; not that the One was Originally better than the other; not that the One has a clearer Grant of *CHRIST* than the Other; but the latter has gathered the heavenly Manna, and uſes it to his unſpeakable Advantage. Whereas, it lies round about the Tents of the former; and whoever will, may take, may eat, and his Soul ſhall live.

Ther. GOD gave the *Manna*, to all the *Iſraelites* both good and bad. But does He give *CHRIST* with this unlimited Freeneſs?

Aſp Our LORD Himſelf, alluding to this very Miracle, vouchſafes You an Anſwer. *My FATHER giveth You the true Bread from Heaven**. My FATHER giveth You his incarnate SON, and his divinely excellent Righteouſneſs. Theſe are Bread indeed; Bread, which came down from the Regions of Heaven; and Bread, which nouriſheth the Soul for the Joys of Heaven.—This my FATHER *giveth You*; though not in actual Poſſeſſion, yet in Right to poſſeſs. This He giveth You, in the free indefinite Grant of his Word: without which Grant, any Attempt to poſſeſs, even in the moſt upright of Men, would be illegal and preſumptuous: by virtue of which Grant, even the poor Sinner has an unqueſtionable Warrant to receive and poſſeſs, the Riches of *CHRIST*.

Ther. Unqueſtionable! Is not this Expreſſion too peremptory? That ſuch a Grant ſhould be made to *Believers*, I can eaſily conceive But is it made to Sinners—to any Sinners—to the moſt abandoned Sinners?

Aſp. Yes, *Theron*, to Sinners. And when Sinners receive the Grant, then they commence Believers.—Was it made to Believers only, no Man living would inherit

* John vi. 32.

inherit the Bleſſing. Becauſe all Men are, by the Depravity and Impotence of their Nature, originally concluded under Sin and Unbelief.

What ſaid our LORD? My Father giveth *You*; that is, the People who ſtood around, and heard his gracious Voice. Many of whom were in a carnal State habitually, and even then were in a murmuring wicked Frame *. —— What ſays his Prophet? To *Us* a Son is given: not to Us; who were antecedently Children of the Light; but who *walked in Darkneſs, and dwelt in the Shadow of Death* †. —— What ſaith GOD the LORD? He that created the Heavens, and ſtretched them out? *I will give Thee*, meaning his beloved SON, *for a Covenant*; it is not ſaid, of Believers, but *of the People*; it is not ſaid, of new Creatures, but *of the Gentiles*. Who were the vileſt of all Creatures, or, as You have properly ſpoke, the moſt abandoned Sinners.——That We may underſtand more clearly the Signification of theſe Terms, and ſee the true Extent of this Gift, it is added; I will give Thee *to open the blind Eyes, and to bring out the Priſoners from the Priſon* ‡. Miſerable and guilty Wretches, blinded by the Devil, and inſlaved to their Luſts; theſe are the Patentees in the heavenly Grant. To theſe the great SURETY is given, together with all the Benefits of his Covenant.

Here then the Grant and the Gift are mentioned; the Perſons, for whom they are deſigned, are ſpecified, and expreſly named. They are Sinners; *blinded* and *inſlaved* Sinners; or, if there be any other more obnoxious Sort, they are all comprehended in this one Word, *Gentiles*. Only allow theſe Texts to be true; only allow the divine Speaker to be ſincere and faithful; then We may boldly affirm; That *any*, that *every* poor Sinner is authorized to ſay, "GOD "gives me his SON, to be my Covenant Surety. "I take Him at his Word. The SURETY and "all his Merits are mine,"——Divinely rich Bounty! "O, let Us not refuſe what, on this Conſideration,

* John vi. 26, 41. † Iſai. ix. 2, 6.
‡ Iſai. xlii. 6, 7.

the unerring SPIRIT calls *our own Mercy* *. Let Us adore the Beneficence of our GOD. Let Us believe his promising Word. And, in this sweet, this easy Manner, obtain both present and final Salvation.

Ther. Let me recollect — *CHRIST* is given for the World, the apostate World, to believe on —— *CHRIST* has died, not for the Righteous, but for the Ungodly——*CHRIST* came in the Flesh to save Sinners, even the chief of Sinners.——Well, *Aspasio*, if these Things are true (and how can they be otherwise? since they are the express Doctrine of Scripture) it is pity, but they were more generally known. For my part, I must confess, they are not only new, but strange to me. Though I have read them in the Bible, yet when I come to consider them, and compare them with what passes in my Breast, I find they are quite contrary to my usual Ways of thinking.

Asp. You remind me of a valuable Person, whom I once numbered among my Acquaintance, and whose Way of thinking was somewhat similar to your own. Will You give me leave to relate his Case?

Ther. Most gladly. It will be some Kind of Consolation to hear, that Others have laboured under the same Difficulties with myself, and been subject to the same Distresses. If I am informed of their *Deliverance* from those Distresses, it will be like shewing me an opened Door, for effecting my own Escape. If I am likewise acquainted with the *Manner* of their Deliverance, this will furnish me with a Clue to guide my Steps.

Asp. This Person was roused from a Habit of Indolence and Supineness, into a serious Concern for his eternal Welfare. Convinced of his depraved Nature and aggravated Guilt, He had recourse to the Scriptures, and to frequent Prayer. He attended the Ordinances of Christianity, and sought earnestly for an *assured Interest* in *CHRIST*. But found no stedfast Faith,

* Jonah ii. 8.

Faith, and tasted very little Comfort. At length He applied to an eminent Divine, and laid open the State of his Heart. Short, but weighty, was the Answer he received. "I perceive, Sir, the Cause of all your Distress. You do not, you will not, come to *CHRIST* "*as a Sinner*. This Mistake stands between your "Soul and the Joy of Religion. This detains you in "the Gall of Bitterness;" and take heed, O! take heed, "lest it consign you over to the Bond of Iniquity." This Admonition never departed from the Gentleman's Mind; and it became a happy Means of removing the Obstructions to his Peace.

Remember this little History, *Theron*; and may it prove as efficacious for your Good, as it is pertinent to your Circumstances! Remember, that the free Grant of *CHRIST*, made in the Word of Truth, and addressed to Sinners of Mankind, is the only Basis and Ground-work of Faith. An Apostle, after all the Labours of his exemplary Life, can have no better. And a *Magdalene* or a *Manasseh*, as a Motive and Encouragement for their turning to the LORD, have the very same.

But we digress from the principal Subject. Since You disapprove *my* Account of Faith, I must desire You to favour me with a Description, more correct and unexceptionable. For, as You justly observed, this is a *very momentous* Article. —— Is not *CHRIST* the Source of all spiritual Good, and Faith the main Channel of Conveyance? Surely then it should be made and kept, as clear as possible. —— Is not *CHRIST* the Foundation of all true Godliness, and Faith the Master-arch in this sacred Structure? Surely then it should be raised and turned, with the utmost Care.

Ther. Palæmon's Account is this — *Faith*, He says, is a firm Persuasion, that *JESUS CHRIST* has shed his Blood, and fulfilled all Righteousness; has sustained the Punishment due to Sin, and obtained full Reconciliation with GOD. That all this Grace, and each of these Benefits, are free, perfectly free;

for You, for me, for others. In consequence of this Persuasion, the Sinner flies to *CHRIST*, comes to *CHRIST*, and trusts in *CHRIST* for his own Salvation.

Asp. I have the highest Regard for *Palæmon*'s Judgment; and I cannot but think, my Opinion is confirmed even by his. —— The Act of *flying* to *CHRIST*, is an appropriating Act. It implies an Intention to get out of Danger; it implies a Discovery of *CHRIST* as the appointed Safety; and consists in making Use of Him as such. How can this be done, but by a Persuasion that He *is mine?* That his Sufferings were in *my* Stead, and that his Death is *my* Safe-guard. —— What is meant by *Coming* to *CHRIST*, We may learn from *Jeremiah.— Behold! We come unto Thee, for Thou art the LORD our GOD* *. Coming, You see, includes a real Persuasion, that the LORD is *our* GOD. While We are wholly destitute of this Persuasion, We stand at a Distance, and our Souls are afar off. We are never brought nigh; We never come in the Prophet's Sense; till We are taught to say, each One for Himself, *Thou art the LORD my GOD.* —— The Act of *Trusting in CHRIST* is much of the same Nature. It pre-supposes, that *CHRIST* is the Trustee of the Covenant of Grace; it proceeds upon a Conviction of his Faithfulness in executing the Office; and it is a solemn Surrender or Giving up the whole Affair of our Salvation into his Hand. Giving it up, not in Uncertainty of Success (this would be mistrusting, rather than trusting) but with a Certainty, in some measure suitable to the Fidelity and Ability of HIM, with whom We have to do.

If You still are doubtful, whether any such Persuasion is implied in *Trusting*, let Us choose a Referee. Let us carry our Controversy to the King of *Israel*, Inquire of *David*, why He trusts in the LORD, and what

* Jer. iii. 22.

what he means by truſting? To both theſe Inquiries He anſwers diſtinctly and fully, *The LORD is my "high Tower, my Shield, and He in whom I truſt* *. "He *is* —— He is *my* Shield —— of this I am per- "ſuaded, and *therefore* I truſt in him: or this I be- "lieve, and in *ſo doing*, I truſt on Him."

Ther. There is an Air of *Aſſurance* in your Repreſentation of Faith; which ſounds harſh in my Ear, and appears preſumptuous in my Eye. It is as if People pretended to know their Seat in Heaven, before the Judgment Day.

Aſp. The *Papiſts*, I own, take great Offence at this Expreſſion, and utterly explode this Doctrine. But they are no infallible Guides, for Us to follow; neither are they very inviting Patterns, for Us to imitate. You and I, *Theron*, cannot be offended at the Expreſſion or the Doctrine, if We recollect what We have been taught in the firſt Stage of Life, and What is profeſſed in the laſt Scene of Mortality. We are taught even from our Infancy, that the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper, is not only a Sign of Spiritual Grace, but a Pledge to *aſſure* Us thereof. At the Interment of the Dead, We profeſs our *ſure* and certain Hope of a Reſurrection to eternal Life. That this is always applied, with due Propriety, in our Burial-Service, I will not venture to aſſert; that it ſufficiently countenances my Sentiments, None will undertake to deny. And if this countenances, the Apoſtle authorizes them, when He addreſſes Us with this very remarkable Exhortation; *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the Blood of JESUS, let us draw near with a true Heart in* full Aſſurance *of Faith*; with a firm Perſuaſion of Acceptance; with a certain Expectation of Succeſs.

However, if You diſlike the Word Aſſurance, We will change it for the more ſoftened, and more modeſtly-ſounding Term, *Appropriation.*

* Pſal. cxliv. 2.

Ther. You change it for a more ſoftened, not for a more intelligible Term. I muſt deſire to know, what You mean by the Word Appropriation.

Aſp. To appropriate, in the theological Senſe, is to take home the Grace of GOD, which lies in the common indefinite Grant of the Goſpel. Is *CHRIST* the Treaſure hid in the Field? To appropriate this Treaſure, is to receive and uſe it as our own Portion. Is *CHRIST* the Balm of *Gilead*, full of ſaving Health? To appropriate this Balm, is to take and apply it for the Recovery of our own Souls. And without ſuch an Appropriation, how can We either be enriched by the former, or healed by the latter?

Let me farther explain my Meaning, and exemplify the Poſition, by conſidering *CHRIST* in his ſeveral Offices. —— *CHRIST*, as a Prieſt, is made to guilty Creatures Righteouſneſs. When We appropriate the Grace of our great HIGH PRIEST, this is the Language of our Hearts, *In the LORD have I Righteouſneſs* *. —— *CHRIST*, as a Prophet, is made to ignorant Creatures Wiſdom. When We appropriate the Benefits of our unerring PROPHET, this is the Perſuaſion of our Souls, *Though I ſit in Darkneſs, the LORD will be a Light unto me* †. *CHRIST*, as a King, is made unto depraved Creatures Sanctification. When We appropriate the Munificence of our Almighty KING, this is our comfortable Truſt, *The LORD will deliver me from every evil Work* ‡.

This is what I mean by Appropriation. —— That ſomething of this Kind is included in the Eſſence of Faith, is the Sentiment I would maintain, — Which Sentiment might be confirmed, if ſuch Confirmation were demanded, by a Multitude of the moſt illuſtrious Witneſſes. Witneſſes ſo illuſtrious, that they were a Bleſſing to the World, and an Honour to human Nature. So numerous, that, without giving an Abſtract

* Iſai. xlv. 24. † Mic. vii. 8.

‡ 2 Tim. iv. 18.

Abſtract of their Teſtimonies, it might ſeem tedious only to recite their Names *.

Ther. I will diſpenſe with your Recital of their Names, only let me have a Specimen of their Teſtimonies.

Aſp. Firſt, then, let me preſent You with Dr. *Owen*; than whom *England* has produced few Writers, either more judicious or more devout. "Faith, He tells us "in his *Catechiſm*, is a gracious Reſting upon the "free Promiſes of GOD in *JESUS CHRIST* "for Mercy, with a *firm Perſuaſion* of Heart, that "GOD *is* a reconciled Father to *Us* in the SON "of his Love."—Next, let me introduce the learned and juſtly celebrated *Altingius*, Profeſſor of Divinity at *Heidelberg*. "Faith, He ſays, is a Knowledge of "the Grace of GOD in *CHRIST*, together with "a fiduciary Reliance on it, or an *Application* of it to "a Man's *own Self*." — To theſe let me add, the

* If the Reader ſhould inquire after their Names, He will find *ſome* of them enumerated in the following Catalogue. *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Melanthon*, *Beza*, *Bullinger*, *Bucer*, *Knox*, *Craig*, *Melvil*, *Bruce*, *Davidſon*, *Forbes*, &c.—*Urſinus*, *Zanchius*, *Junius*, *Piſcator*, *Rollock*, *Danæus*, *Wendelinus*, *Chamierus*, *Sharpius*, *Bodius*, *Pareus*, *Altingius*, *Triglandii*, (*Giſbertus* & *Jacobus*), *Arnoldus*, *Mareſius*; the four Profeſſors at *Leyden*, *Wallæus*, *Rivetus*, *Polyander*, *Thyſius*, *Wollebius*, *Heideggerus*, *Eſſenius*, *Turretinus*, &c.—Many eminent *Britiſh* Divines, Biſhop *Babington*, *Davenant*, *Hall*; Mr. *Perkins*, *Pemble*, *Wiſlet*, *Gouge*, *Rogers*, *Burgeſs*, *Owen*, *Marſhal*, &c.

If we were apparently and demonſtrably in an Error, yet, to err with ſuch Company and the Footſteps of ſuch Guides, muſt very much tend to mitigate the Severity of Cenſure. But, I believe, few ſerious Perſons will venture to charge Error and Deluſion upon ſuch a venerable Body of Proteſtant Divines; ſo eminent for their Learning, and ſo exemplary for their Holineſs; whoſe Labours were ſo remarkably owned by GOD, and whoſe Sentiments, on this particular Subject, have been adopted by ſo many reformed Churches. — The Declarations of the *Engliſh* and *Palatine* Churches are produced in the Dialogue. I have in my Hand an Extract from the Confeſſions and Standard Doctrines of the Church — of *Scotland* — of *Ireland* — of *France* — of *Helvetia*. With all which *Aſpaſio* has the Happineſs to agree. Only ſome of them are much ſtronger in diſplaying and maintaining the eſpecial *Fiducia*, or the appropriating Perſuaſion of Faith. To quote them, would dignify and ſtrengthen the Cauſe. But, to avoid Prolixity, I forego this Advantage.

unanimous Suffrage of the Churches of the *Palatinate*. It is aſked, in the twenty-firſt Queſtion of their public Catechiſm, "What is true Faith?" To which this Anſwer is returned; "It is not only "an Aſſent to all the Truths, which GOD has "revealed in his Word; but it is an *aſſured* Truſt, "wrought by the HOLY SPIRIT in my Heart, "that Remiſſion of Sins, complete Righteouſneſs, "and eternal Life are given, freely given, not to "Others only, but to *myſelf*; and all this, from the "mere Mercy of GOD, through the alone Merits "of *CHRIST*.

Theſe Teſtimonies are but as the Tythe to the whole Crop. Yet theſe are more than enough to exempt me from the Charge of Singularity. You will not wonder therefore, if I ſtill abide by the good old *Proteſtant* Doctrine, which is eſpouſed by ſo many of the ableſt Judges; which was the darling Tenet of almoſt all our Reformers; which has been ſo ſignally inſtrumental in demoliſhing the Superſtitions of Popery; and is ſo evidently conducive to the Holineſs and the Happineſs of Chriſtians. — Eſpecially, as I apprehend, the Determination of Scripture, and the Experience of ſcriptural Saints, are all on my Side.

Ther. You have now brought the Cauſe to the proper Bar. When a Queſtion ſo important is debated, and an Intereſt ſo momentous is concerned, I cannot acquieſce in any Authority leſs than divine. I cannot, and indeed I think, We ought not. Nothing ſhould ſatisfy Us on ſuch an Occaſion, but the Word which is unerring and deciſive; the Word, by which We are to ſtand or fall eternally. Whence does it appear, that the Determinations of this divine Word, are on your Side?

Aſp. From the nobleſt Deſcription of Faith, which Language itſelf can form. The Writer to the *Hebrews*, having mentioned the Life of Faith, the Perſeverance of Faith, and the End or Reward of Faith, proceeds to a Definition of this leading Grace. *Now Faith is the Subſtance of Things hoped for, the Evi-*

dence

dence of Things not seen *.——*The Evidence*, exhibiting not a faint Surmise, but a clear Demonstration, both of invisible Blessings, and of our Right to enjoy them. — The *Substance*, realizing what is promised; and giving Us, as it were, a Possession of good Things that are remote, a present Possession of good Things that are future.

Ther. What are those Blessings, and these good Things?

Asp. I will inform my *Theron*; and in such a Manner, from such Passages, as shall farther ascertain my Representation of Faith. —— What says the Apostle of the Gentiles? *I preached unto you the Gospel* †.—And what is the Substance of this evangelical Dispensation? *CHRIST died for our Sins* ‡. —— That so exalted a Person as the SON of GOD, and LORD of Glory, should *die*, is wonderful —— That He should die for *Sins*, the most abominable Objects, and for Sinners, the most detestable Creatures, is abundantly more wonderful — That He should die, not for Sins in general, but for *our* Sins in particular, this is inexpressibly wonderful, and at the same Time inexpressibly comfortable — Here we have the Gospel and its capital Blessing, expressed in this Proposition, *CHRIST died for Sins*. Here We have Faith and its principal Actings expressed in this Proposition, *CHRIST died for our Sins*. Till the former is preached, the Doctrine is not Gospel; till the latter is believed, it should seem from St. *Paul*'s Account, the Conviction is not Faith.

Let me produce another Instance, extracted like the preceding, from the Rolls of Heaven. *This is the Record, that GOD hath given to Us eternal life* §; not proposed it, on I know not what Conditions, but *hath given*, Freely and fully, without any Reserve, and with a Liberality suited to his inconceiveable

* Heb. xi. 1. † 1 Cor. xv. 1. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 3.
§ 1 John v. 9.

ceiveable Goodneſs, hath given the richeſt of all Prizes: and not to ſome only, or to Others, but to *Us*, even to *Us*.

Ther. Us, that is, the Apoſtles and exalted Saints.

Aſp. Was eternal Life given them becauſe they were Apoſtles? No, verily; but becauſe *CHRIST* died for them —Did *CHRIST* die for them, becauſe they were exalted Saints? In no wiſe; but becauſe they were miſerable Sinners. — Eternal Life was purchaſed for them, when they were Sinners. It was conſigned over to them, when they were Sinners. And neither the Purchaſe, nor the Gift, were founded on their *being* Saints, but aimed at *making* them ſo.

That *CHRIST died for our Sins*—That *GOD hath given to Us eternal Life*. Theſe are the Bleſſings, of which Faith is the Evidence; theſe the good Things, of which Faith is the Subſtance. This is the Honey in the evangelical Hive: and I am at a Loſs to conceive, how We can taſte the Honey, without ſome Appropriation of the good Things to Ourſelves. — This, if I miſtake not, is comprehended in all thoſe figurative Deſcriptions of Faith, which occur in holy Writ.

Ther. Favour me with ſome of thoſe Deſcriptions. I begin to ſee a peculiar Beauty, and an unequaled Richneſs, in the Figures of Scripture. Nothing yields me a more refined Pleaſure, than to inveſtigate and diſcover the exact Senſe of thoſe inſtructive Images. It is ſomewhat like kindling the conſecrated Incenſe: which, when riſing in a Flame, diffuſed Light; when ſpreading in Clouds of Fragrance, diſtributed Refreſhment.

Aſp. Faith is ſtyled, *A Looking unto JESUS*. But if We do not look unto *JESUS*, as the Propitiation for our Sins, what Comfort or what Benefit can We derive from the Sight? —— *A Receiving of CHRIST*. But can I have any Pretence to receive Him, or to take Poſſeſſion of his Merits, unleſs I am convinced, that they are intended for me? This is what neither the Dictates of Conſcience will allow,

allow, nor the Laws of Reaſon authorize.——*A Reſting upon CHRIST* *. But how can We reſt on a Surety, if He has not interpoſed on our Behalf? Or how confide in a Payment, which We believe to be made for others, not for ourſelves? — Surely, *Theron*, when I reſt upon an Object, I uſe it as *my* Support. When I receive a Gift, I take it as *my own* Property. And when the *Iſraelites* looked unto the brazen Serpent, they certainly, regarded it as a Remedy, each particular Perſon for *Himſelf*.

Ther. To caſt Ourſelves upon *CHRIST*, as an all-ſufficient SAVIOUR; and rely on Him, for our whole Salvation; is not this real Faith? This is what I heard, ſome Time ago, from a celebrated Pulpit.

Aſp. If You rely on the All-ſufficiency of his *Will*, as well as of his Power; if You take the Comfort and appropriate the Benefit, reſulting from both; You practiſe the very Thing I recommend. This is what was taught, from the Pulpit of Infallibility; and by thoſe firſt of Preachers, who ſpake as the HOLY GHOST gave them Utterance. Let the convinced Sinner, and the afflicted Soul, *truſt in the Name of the LORD, and ſtay upon his GOD.* Let Him not only reverence *CHRIST*, as the incarnate GOD, and therefore mighty to ſave; but look upon *CHRIST* as *his* GOD, and therefore willing to ſave. Thus let Him *lean upon* the ROCK † of Ages, without indulging a Doubt, concerning his Right to make uſe of it, or the Poſſibility of its failing him.

To caſt Ourſelves upon CHRIST; to caſt our Burden, or *to caſt all our Care* ‡ *upon the LORD*; are

* I find two Words in the Original, which expreſs the Privilege and the Duty of *reſting on CHRIST*: דום which implies ſuch a ſtate of Acquieſcence, as *ſilences* the Clamours of Conſcience, and compoſes the Perturbation of the Spirit. מונחה which ſignifies the Refreſhment and *Repoſe* of a weary Pilgrim; when He arrives at the End of his Journey, and is ſettled for Life in a ſecure, commodious, plentiful Habitation. *Pſ.* xxxvii. 7. *Iſai.* xxviii. 12.

† ישעז Iſai. l. 10. ‡ Επιῤῥιψαντες, 1 Pet. v. 7.

are Metaphors, which may receive some Elucidation, from an Incident recorded in the *Acts*. When the Mariners and Passengers, which sailed with St. *Paul*, saw their Vessel shattered; saw the Waves prevailing; saw no Hope of Safety from continuing in the Ship; they cast themselves * upon the floating Planks. They cast themselves upon the Planks without any Scruple, not questioning their Right to make use of them; and they clave to those Supporters with a chearful Confidence, not doubting but, according to the Apostle's Promise, they should escape safe to Land. — Be this what People mean, when they speak of *venturing* or *casting* themselves upon *CHRIST*, and I approve the Expression, I subscribe the Doctrine. It speaks what I wish for my Friend, for myself and for my Fellow-sinners.

Let Us shift our Situation, and view the Point in another Light. Consider the blessed and glorious Object of our Faith. — *CHRIST* is represented by the Similitude of Bread, heavenly Bread, for the hungry Soul. Faith is characterized by *eating* the Food. And can this be done without a personal Application? — *CHRIST* is held forth under the Image of living Waters, ever running, and always free for the thirsty Appetite. But let them run ever so copiously, let them be presented ever so freely, all this will neither quench the Thirst, nor refresh the Spirits, unless they are *drank*. To do this is the Business of Faith — *CHRIST* is described as a Garment, to accommodate destitute, and beautify deformed Creatures. Faith is expressed by *putting on* this commodious Garment, and wearing this beautiful Robe. And can any Idea, or any Expression, more strongly denote an actual Appropriation?

Ther. It is evident, that many holy People in former Ages, were not possessed of Assurance. —— What is the Language of *David*? It is all Despondency: *I am cast out of the Sight of thine Eyes.* —— To the same melancholy Tune is the Harp of *Asaph* strung. *Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promise fail*

* Απορριψαντες, Acts xxvii. 43.

fail for evermore? — The ſame jealous and diſtruſtful Air breathes in the Complaint of the Church. *The LORD hath forſaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me.* —— Why then ſhould my *Aſpaſio* ſet up a Rule, ſtricter and higher, than thoſe eminent Saints attained?

Aſp. You ſhould rather aſk; Why have the beſt Judges, and the moſt exemplary Chriſtians, in their ſeveral Writings, ſet up this Rule? Why have the Apoſtles of our LORD, and the SPIRIT of our GOD, ſpeaking in the Bible, ſet up this Rule? — To which I might reply; Becauſe it is, of all Precepts, the moſt beneficial. Therefore, they have not ſo much ſet it up, under the Notion of a ſtrict Rule; as they have ſet it forth, under the Character of a choice Bleſſing.

Your Complaint, when put into its proper Language, ſeems to run thus; "Why muſt We be obliged to truſt in *CHRIST alone?* Why muſt "We be obliged to *aſſure* Ourſelves of Salvation by "HIM?" — Whereas, inſtead of a Complaint, it ſhould be Matter of Exultation, and We ſhould rather expreſs Ourſelves in this Manner; "Bleſs the "LORD, O my Soul; that a Sinner, ſuch a vile "Sinner, ſhould be allowed to take *CHRIST* and "all his Salvation as my own; and thus to aſſure "myſelf of Pardon, Holineſs, and Glory."

This Bleſſing was certainly enjoyed by the holy Men of old; but, like every other Species of Felicity in this World, it was enjoyed after an imperfect Manner. — They had an aſſured Perſuaſion of GOD's preſent Favour, and of their own final Happineſs. Nevertheleſs, this aſſured Perſuaſion was liable to the Aſſaults, both of outward Temptations, and of inward Corruptions. Which might, for a While, impair its Vigour, though not deſtroy its Being. As under a tranſient Swoon, the Spirits fail, the Colour departs, but the vital Principle ſubſiſts.

You may farther obſerve, concerning thoſe pious Perſons, that, when they ceaſe to exerciſe this Confidence of Faith, they lament the Failure; *I ſaid, this*

is

is my Infirmity *. — They chide themſelves for it; *Why art Thou caſt down, O my Soul?* — They encourage themſelves againſt it; *Hope in GOD* †, it is thy unqueſtionable Privilege. — How could they do this? On what Grounds, or from what Motive? If they had not a *ſecret* Perſuaſion, that their Ranſom was paid, and their GOD reconciled. Conſequently, that all their Doubts were an Injury to his Fidelity and to his Goodneſs

Nay, the Church, even under her darkeſt Apprehenſions, ſtill ſpeaks the Sentiment, ſtill retains the Grace, for which I am pleading. *My LORD*, uttered with her Lips, argues an *applicatory* Faith in her Heart. — So copious and pregnant are the Evidences of this precious Doctrine! It is confirmed by that very Paſſage, which was produced for its Confutation.

Iher. If this be the Sentiment of the Church, in general, is it alſo the Temper of her particular Members? Was each of them animated by this firm and lively Faith?

Aſp. Let theſe particular Perſons appear, and anſwer for themſelves. — Hear the Declaration of the Pſalmiſt; *Bleſs the LORD, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name* ‡. What is the Cauſe of this holy Tranſport, and devout Praiſe? is it, becauſe GOD poſſibly *may*, becauſe HE probably *will?* No; but becauſe HE actually *does* forgive: *Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities.* — Take notice of *Job*'s Belief, and *Job*'s Support, amidſt his unexampled Sufferings. *I know that my REDEEMER liveth*; not only that there is a Redeemer, but that He is, together with all his ſaving Benefits, *mine*. Which, being a Truth ſo ſweet and delightful, is expreſſed a ſecond Time; *whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf* §, to my own Advantage, and for my own Comfort: ſee Him exerting his almighty Power and infinite Mercy, to reſcue my Body from the Grave, and to deliver my Soul from Hell. — What was *Habakkuk*'s Security,

* Pſal. lxxvii. 10. † Pſal. xlii. 5. ‡ Pſal. ciii. 1, 3.
§ Job. xix. 25, 27.

Security, amidſt the threatening, the tremendous, the triumphant Malice of his own, and his Country's Enemies? *The LORD GOD is my Strength.* He ſays not, *I wiſh, I pray*, for the divine Favour, and the divine Succour; but I am perſuaded, they both are mine; my ineſtimable Portion, and my inviolable Safeguard. *He will make my Feet like Hind's Feet*, that I ſhall perfectly eſcape from all Danger: *and He will make me walk upon mine high Places*, beyond the reach of every Evil *.

Ther. Is this the Language of Believers under the New Teſtament Diſpenſation?

Aſp. Under every Diſpenſation, *Theron.* —— They who lived before the Law, *were perſuaded* † of the Promiſes; had not the leaſt Diſtruſt, with regard to the Certainty of their Performance; nay, they *embraced them* ‡ as their own, they hugged them, as it were, to their very Souls.——They who lived under the Law could ſay; *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath He removed our Tranſgreſſions from Us* ‖.—And can You imagine, in the Days of the Goſpel, when our Advantages are greater and our Light is clearer, that our Faith ſhould be weaker, or our Hope fainter? St. *Peter* makes a Profeſſion, which excludes all Doubting; *I am a Witneſs of the Sufferings of CHRIST, and alſo a Partaker of the Glory that ſhall be revealed* §. St. *Paul* anſwers in the ſame heroic Strain; *I know whom I have believed; and I am perſuaded that neither Life nor Death, nor any Creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate me from the Love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS my LORD***. With both which, the Confeſſion of Faith, recorded by St. *Luke*, is exactly correſpondent; *We believe that, through the Grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, We ſhall be ſaved even as They* ††.

Ther.

* Heb. iii. 19.

† Πεισθεντες, Heb. xi. 13. ‡ Ασπασαμενοι.

‖ Pſal. ciii. 12. § 1 Pet. v. 1. ** Rom. viii. 29.

†† Acts xv. 11.

Ther. Was not this a Privilege peculiar to the Apoſtles.

Aſp. By no means. All Believers are Brethren, and have *like precious Faith.* —— Hear how St. *Peter* exhorts all his People; *Gird up the Loins of your Mind, and hope to the End*; or, as the Word ſhould rather be tranſlated, hope perfectly, hope aſſuredly, *for the Grace that is to be brought unto You at the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST**. Maintain, not a dim, but a bright Hope; not a wavering, but a ſteady Expectation, of eternal Life. That free, but grand Gift, of which the *LORD JESUS*, at his ſecond Coming, ſhall put You in full Poſſeſſion. —— The Apoſtle, writing to his *Hebrew* Converts, encourages them all to *hold faſt the Confidence, and the Rejoicing of Hope, firm unto the End* †. From whence it is deducible, that a Truſt amounting to Confidence, and the Joy which naturally reſults from ſuch a Truſt, were the common Portion of Chriſtians; poſſeſſed, not barely by ſome few exalted Saints, but by the Followers of *JESUS* in general. — I might bring many more Inſtances. But why ſhould I multiply Proofs? Since the beloved Diſciple declares; *Theſe Things have I written unto You, that believe on the Name of the SON of GOD, that Ye may* know *that Ye have eternal Life.*

Ther. True, *Aſpaſio.* This coincides with my Apprehenſions. The Scriptures are written—firſt, that We may *believe*, and be intitled to eternal Life—— next, that We may have the *Knowledge* of our Belief, and a Conſciouſneſs of our Title. The Apoſtle ſuppoſes his Correſpondents to poſſeſs the former, yet not to have attained the latter.

Aſp.

* 1 *Pet.* i 13. Εις τελος or μεχρι τελους, ſignify, *To the End.* But τελειως, as far as I can recollect, is never uſed in this Senſe, either by ſacred or profane Writers. It may be rendered *perfectè, integrè*, in this Connection, *cum firmâ Fiduciâ*, with a firm Affiance.

† Heb. iii. 6.

Aſp. Is it certain, that he makes ſuch a Suppoſition? He writes, I imagine, not with a View of leading them to either, but of *confirming* them in both.—He intimates, that the Privilege and the Comfort ſhould go together. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Surety; We ſhould be perſuaded, that He has paid our Debt, and ſatisfied Juſtice to the very uttermoſt Farthing. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Bridegroom; We ſhould reſt aſſured, that his Righteouſneſs, his Inheritance, and his Kingdom are ours. And why ſhould We take pains to ſeparate, what GOD's Word and the very Nature of Things have united? Will this turn to our Advantage? Muſt it not iſſue in our Loſs?—Beſides, according to your own Interpretation, whoever falls ſhort of this chearing Knowledge, falls ſhort of *one* great End for which the Scriptures were written. He receives not his full Reward. He only *gleans*, where he might *reap*. Is toſſed on the Ocean of Uncertainty: whereas *they that have believed*, have gained the Port, have dropped their Anchor, and *enter into Reſt* *.

Ther. Believed! What? That our Sins are laid upon *CHRIST*; that He was obedient to our Stead; that all Spiritual Bleſſings are thereby procured for *our*——even for *our* Enjoyment?

Aſp. The Bleſſings You mention, are evidently the Purport of the Goſpel. And I know of no other juſtifying Faith, but that which relates to the Goſpel, and believes its Report †. Nor can I think, that any other Belief will adminiſter the Tranquillity, or produce the Reſt, ſpecified by the Apoſtle.——But here, I find, lies the Core and Root of our Controverſy. This is the preciſe Point to be ſettled; What it is to *believe?* What is included in this very important Word?—This Queſtion might renew our Diſpute, and cauſe the paſt Arguments to recur. Whereas, I would gladly get rid of Diſputation. We have already been too long detained in theſe diſagreeable Paths,

* Heb. iv. 3. † Iſai. liii. 1.

Paths. However, since You have given the Occasion, I may just touch upon another Text or two. For I would willingly drive this Nail to the Head; and not leave my Friend unconvinced, on a Subject of the utmost Consequence.

The LORD declares by his Prophet, *I, even I am He, that blotteth out thy Transgressions.* To believe, is to subscribe this Declaration, to subscribe with our Hand, and profess from our Heart, "LORD it "is done, as Thou hast said."—Faith is, if I may so speak, the Echo of the divine Voice. It eagerly catches, and punctually reverberates the joyful Sound. Does GOD say, *Thou art my People?* Faith replies, *Thou art my GOD*:* not barely desiring, but confidently averring, an Interest in his Favour. This Explanation of Faith, is given Us by a Wisdom, which cannot be deceived; by a Fidelity, which cannot deceive.—Once more. Our LORD bears this Testimony concerning *Thomas*; *Thomas, thou hast believed.* Now then, I think, We have got an infallible Touchstone. Let Us examine, what that is, which *JESUS CHRIST* calls *Believing.* Whatever it be, it is the Determination of Truth itself; and should pass for a Verdict, from which there lies no Appeal. And this, this is the Confession of *Thomas, My LORD, and my GOD*†. This, this expresses, what our Divine MASTER calls *Believing.* When, therefore, We confess with our Lips, and are persuaded in our Hearts that *JESUS* is *our LORD*, who bought Us with his Blood; that *JESUS* is *our GOD*, who will exert all his adorable Perfections for our Good; then We truly believe. We believe, in our SAVIOUR's Sense of the Word; We have that Faith, which *He* allows to be genuine.

Ther. Is this the *constant* Language of Faith? According to this Account, there is no Difference between the Infant and the Adult; between the newborn Babe, and the full-grown Man in *CHRIST.*

Your

* Hos. ii. 23. † John xx. 28, 29.

Your ſpiritual Children, *Aſpaſio*, muſt be Men from their Birth: nay, born in all the Vigour of Manhood. Whereas, the Apoſtle makes an evident Difference between the *Babes*, the *young Men*, and the *Fathers*; between Faith, and the Aſſurance of Faith, and the full Aſſurance of Faith. If We are told of a Patriarch, who was *ſtrong in Faith*; We read of ſome *Roman* Converts, who were *weak in the Faith*; and We hear our LORD ſpeaking to Diſciples, who were *fearful and of little Faith.*

Aſp. Between Faith, and the *full* Aſſurance of Faith, the Apoſtle makes a Difference. The one is the moſt exalted Pitch, where the other is but an inferior Elevation. Yet both are Rounds of the ſame Ladder. — I don't remember, that the ſacred Writer any where diſtinguiſhes between Faith and Aſſurance. Πιστις and Πεποιθησις, *Faith* and *Confidence*, are joined in the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*. It is the Opinion of the beſt Critics, that the Senſe of the latter is included in the former. The Critic's Opinion is confirmed by the Apoſtle's Declaration, *We have Acceſs with Confidence through Faith* *. Could yonder Sun diffuſe Warmth through the Air, if it had no Warmth in itſelf? No more could Faith produce Confidence in the Believer, if, in its own Nature, it did not contain the ſame.

The Caſe of *little Faith*, I think, may be explained from our LORD's own Expoſtulation; *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore didſt Thou doubt?* Here was a Faith, not only in *CHRIST*'s Power, but alſo in his Will. Nay; here was an appropriating Faith, by which the Apoſtle applied both to himſelf. —— "I "verily believe, that my Divine MASTER is "*able* to preſerve me, even though I venture to tread "upon this tempeſtuous Sea I am perſuaded like-"wiſe, that He *will* uphold me, and not ſuffer his "Servant to periſh in the hazardous Enterprize." Nothing leſs than this could have produced that hazardous

* Eph. iii. 12.

zardous Enterprize, or have emboldened Him to walk upon the rolling Billows.

Do you not discern, in this Instance, some Degree of personal Application, some real Assurance of Faith? 'Tis true, this Faith was violently assaulted by Doubts, and greatly infeebled by Fears *. Yet still it was of the applicatory Kind. *He can*, *He will*, were expressive of its Nature; though the boisterous Winds, and the terrifying Appearance of Things, almost drowned its Voice, or stifled the Words in their Utterance.

Ther. If You allow no Difference between Faith and Confidence, I am very sure, St. *John* puts a Difference between *Babes*, *young Men*, and *Fathers*.

Asp. He does, *Theron*. And so would I. Neither can I think of any Thing more proper to explain my Meaning, or establish my Tenet, than your own Comparison. —— In some fruitful Family, You may see one Child in Leading-Strings; another able to walk by itself; a third come home, improved and cultivated, from the School of Literature. Observe their Speech. One lisps out a few broken Sentences; another talks intelligibly, but very incorrectly; the last has learned to express Himself with tolerable Propriety. Yet each speaks the *same* Language, notwithstanding the various Degrees of Fluency in their Utterance, or Purity in their Diction. — So Faith always speaks one and the same uniform Language. Whether She lisps or stammers; whether She whispers in faint Accents, or raises her Voice in a more manly Tone; this is still the unvaried Import of her Speech; *GOD*, *even*

* I must beg of the candid Reader, to take particular Notice of this Limitation; and must intreat the impartial Examiner, not to forget this Concession. We no where suppose, that a Freedom from all Fears, or a Superiority to all Doubts, are included in the Nature of Faith. We only affirm, that an appropriating Persuasion or Assurance, are necessary to the Being of Faith. This Assurance may be encumbered with Doubts, and may conflict with Fears. But still it is *Assurance*—*real* Assurance—and *proves* itself to be such, by opposing and struggling with the contrary Prin-

even our own GOD, will give Us his Bleſſing — Can You forget, how St. *John* addreſſes even his little Children? *I write unto You, little Children, becauſe your Sins* ARE FORGIVEN *.

Ther. Will not this Account diſcourage ſome, and offend others, who are not arrived at ſuch an exalted Pitch?

Aſp. I would not offend the meaneſt, nor diſcourage the weakeſt of my REDEEMER's Servants. — As for *Offence*; that cannot be given, and ought not to be taken, when all We advance is ſtrictly conformable to the unerring Oracles. Whereas, to qualify and attenuate the ſcriptural Deſcriptions of Faith, in Complaiſance to our own Experience — to make the unhappy Fluctuations and unworthy Suſpicions, which poſſeſs the Breaſts of ſome particular Chriſtians — to make them the Rule of explaining, or the Meaſure of inforcing ſo capital a Duty; this, ſure, would be an Offence to GOD, an Injury to his Word, and detrimental to the Welfare of Souls.

With regard to *Diſcouragement*; I cannot conceive, how this ſhould enſue, from informing the poor Sinner, that He has a Right to apply *CHRIST*, and all *CHRIST*'s Merits to himſelf: or from exhorting the poor Sinner to do this, without any Heſitation, and with a reſolute Dependence. In this Caſe, to *doubt* is to be diſcouraged; as much as You want Certainty, ſo much You want Conſolation. The proper Way to comfort theſe diſtreſſed People, is, not to allow but to diſſipate their Doubts; to blow away thoſe dead Aſhes, that the ſmothered Embers may ſhine and glow.

Were We to inquire after the Cauſe of that Diſquietude and Deſpondency, which are ſo common among *modern* Profeſſors, I am inclined to ſuſpect, We ſhould find it lying hid in their wrong Apprehenſions both of *CHRIST*, and of Faith. — They look upon *CHRIST*, as a rigorous and forbidding Monarch, who inſiſts upon ſome hard Terms and high Qua-

* 1 John ii. 12.

Qualifications. Whereas, his Heart and his Arms are ever open. His Heart as open, as infinite Love can ſet it: his Arms as open, as infinite Merit can make them.—They look upon Faith, as containing a Poſſibility only, or at moſt a Probability of Salvation through his Name. It is with them a Kind of *Peradventure*. A Situation of Mind, fluctuating and pendulous. "Perhaps, I may ſucceed, and be eternally "bleſſed. Perhaps, I may be rejected, and eternally "ruined." Such a ſtate of Suſpence, in an Affair of everlaſting Conſequence, cannot but create Uneaſineſs and Anxiety.

This Uneaſineſs and Anxiety ſeem to have been little known in the earlier and better Days of the Church. And why? Becauſe Chriſtians were then expoſed to the Rage of Perſecution? Becauſe they were placed nearer the Time of *CHRIST*'s ſojourning on Earth? I rather think, becauſe they were taught this particular and comfortable Application of *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs. They exerciſed a confident Affiance on *JESUS*, as *their own* REDEEMER; and where ſhewn a more direct Way to obtain this Aſſurance, than merely to ſearch after their own renewed Qualities.

Ther. Surely, *Aſpaſio*, in this Particular You differ, not from me only, but from the Generality of the *Orthodox*.

Aſp. I am ſorry to find myſelf under a Neceſſity of differing from any worthy Perſons much more of diſagreeing with the Generality. This I can ſafely aver, that it is not from an Affectation of Novelty, or any Fondneſs for Diſputing, but from a diſintereſted Regard to the Truth of the Goſpel. I ſhould be glad to have the Concurrence of all the Serious, and all the Pious. But I dare not purchaſe their Approbation, I dare not attempt a Coalition of Sentiments, by diminiſhing the boundleſs Riches of Grace, or reſtricting the abſolute Freeneſs of Salvation by *CHRIST*.

You are pleaſed to remind me of the *Orthodox*. Pray, my dear Friend, what is the Standard of Orthodoxy?

thodoxy?——Is it the Word of Revelation? This ſpeaks once, yea twice, nay ſome Hundreds of Times in our Favour.—Is it the Doctrine of our Reformers from Popery? With theſe We jar not, but exactly harmonize.—Is it to be taken from the old Confeſſions of Faith, and the Catechiſms of proteſtant Churches? To theſe We appeal, and have the Sanction of their Authority.——Has the *modern* Way of treating and ſtating this momentous Subject ſo much to alledge for its Support?

Let me farther aſk—Are We better than our Fathers? Is Chriſtianity in a thriving Condition, or practical Religion on the advancing Hand? The Reverſe, the melancholy Reverſe is undeniably true.—When our Writers inforced, and our Preachers urged, what I am defending, Profeſſors were alive, and animated with the Power of Godlineſs. Whereas, now We ſeem to be degenerated into the mere Form; We *have a Name to live, but are* languid, liſtleſs, and if not *dead**, yet ready to die.——It behoves Us therefore to conſider, whether the Declenſion, the Decays, the Unfruitfulneſs, ſo juſtly lamented in the preſent Age, be not owing to the Abſence of this appropriating Belief, or this aſſured Perſuaſion.

A ſweet Aſſurance of Pardon, a comfortable Perſuaſion of our Reconciliation with GOD, an eſtabliſhed Hope of eternal Glory through *JESUS CHRIST*; theſe will be operative in the Soul, as "a Torch in the Sheaf." Theſe will inkindle Love, and increaſe Watchfulneſs; theſe will beget the true Humility of Mind, and work an unfeigned Abhorrence of Sin; theſe will inlarge the Heart with Charity, and exalt the Affections above the World. Theſe are the proper, and the only effectual Means of *making the Man of GOD perfect*, that is, *thoroughly furniſhed to every good Work* †.

*Rev. iii. 1.

† For the Diſplay and Confirmation of theſe Points, I do, with great Pleaſure, and without any Diffidence, refer to Mr. MARSHAL's *Goſpel Myſtery of Sanctification*. Which I ſhall not recommend

But the doubting Frame is not fitted to yield any of these Fruits. Nay, I am apprehensive, there are several Graces, which can hardly be exercised, several Duties, which can scarcely be performed, so long as this Spirit of Diffidence prevails.

Ther. Name them, *Aspasio.*

Asp. I am afraid, lest I should seem to arrogate the Office of a Teacher; which neither becomes my Condition, nor is agreeable to my Temper.

Ther. I beseech You, my dear Friend, let Us wave Ceremony, and have nothing to do with Compliments. My Soul is in jeopardy. My present Comfort, and my everlasting Happiness, are at stake. And shall We suffer any little Punctilios to overbear such weighty Considerations?

Suppose, You are a Teacher; I have great Need, and am very desirous to become your Scholar. For I freely confess, that, knowing as I may seem in other Instances, I am very ignorant in the great Peculiarities of the Gospel. Nay, though I have read the Scriptures in a *critical* View, I have been an utter Stranger to their spiritual Meaning. Here, I am un-

in-

commend in the Style of a Critic, or like a Reader of Taste, but with all the Simplicity of the weakest Christian; I mean, from my own Experience. It has been made one of the most useful Books to my own Soul. I scarce ever fail to receive spiritual Consolation and Strength from the Perusal of it. And was I to be banished into some desolate Island, possessed only of *two* Books besides my BIBLE, this should be *one* of the two, and perhaps the first that I would choose.

Should any Person, hitherto a Stranger to the Work, purchase it on this Recommendation, I must desire to suggest one Caution—That He be not surprized, if, in the Beginning, He meets with something new, and quite out of the common Road. Or, if surprized, that He would not be offended, but calmly and attentively proceed. He will find the Author's Design opening itself by Degrees. He will discern more and more the Propriety of his Method. And what might, at the first View, appear like a Stumbling-block; will prove to be a fair, compendious, and ample Avenue—to the palace of *Truth*—to the Temple of *Holiness*—and to the Bowers of *Happiness*.

As the Book itself is scarce, a very good Abridgment of it may be had, at Mr. *Keith*'s in *Grace-church-street*.

instructed as a Babe; here, therefore, I ought to be teachable as a Babe. Yes; in this respect I would become as a *little Child*, that I may enter into the Knowledge, and possess the Privileges of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Asp. Your Answer, *Theron*, shall be a Law.—— *Love to GOD*, is the first Commandment; and without all Peradventure, is the principal Grace. But, is it easy, is it possible to love GOD, before We have any Persuasion of his Love to Us? This is what the Apostles did not, could not do. And, if it exceeded their Ability, it will doubtless be above the Reach of our Capacity. The Thing may be attempted; the practice may be urged. We may see the Necessity of it, and desire to perform it. But we shall never, never be able to exercise it, till We have some comfortable Apprehension of GOD's Reconciliation and good Will to Us. *We love HIM* ——Wherefore? From what Inducement? *Because HE first loved us**; and because this Love hath been made evident to our Consciences, by the Light of Faith.

What think You of *Delight in GOD?* This also is a christian Grace. But *how can Two walk together, except they be agreed?* We never covet an Intimacy with the Person, who declares Himself our Enemy. Nay, if there be only a suspicion, that He bears Us a secret ill Will, We shall be jealous of trusting Him, and averse to approach Him. This was the Case of our first Parents, immediately after the Fall. Instead of drawing near to their CREATOR, with Pleasure and Gratitude; they fled from Him, with Anxiety and Terror. And why? Because they were under the alarming Apprehensions of his Displeasure.—Whereas, let Us once believe, what the Apostle affirms; *When We were Enemies, We were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his SON*†. Let us cordially credit, what the Prophet repeatedly declares; *Therefore will the LORD wait that He may*

* 1 John iv. 10. † Rom. v. 10.

*be gracious unto You; and therefore will he be exalted, that He may have Mercy upon you**. Then We shall seek his Face with Alacrity. Our Affections will be on the Wing to salute their Almighty BENEFACTOR. We shall *joy in GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

Ther. To the Enjoyment of many spiritual Consolations, and the Exercise of several delightful Graces, I acknowledge, an assured Faith is necessary; but—

Asp. Ay, *Theron*, You may well hesitate. It will be difficult to fill up the Chasm in your Discourse. For my part, I know not any Duty of Holiness, which can be performed aright, without some Degree of this confiding Faith.—We are to *walk worthy of HIM, who hath called Us to his Kingdom and Glory*†: but if we doubt, whether We in particular are called, how can this influence our Conversation?—We are to be *Followers of GOD, as* his *dear Children*‡. But if We do not, cannot, will not believe, so as to cry "Abba, FATHER," how can such a Con-

* *Isai.* xxx. 18 That admirable Commentator VITRINGA, who generally draws his Bow with a steady Hand, and shoots his Arrow with the exactest Aim, Here seems to miss the Mark. He appears to have thought, that *waiting to be* gracious, implies a *Delay* in the Exercise of the Attribute, and is the same as to *abstain from being* gracious. Had this been the Meaning, the Language would probably have been, not לחננכם but מהננכם——*To wait to be gracious* signifies, to stand over a People with the continued Tenders of Grace and Mercy, even while they refuse to accept them. This was the Case with GOD and *Israel*. GOD promised to defend the *Israelites*; they obstinately refused to confide in his Protection. GOD dissuaded them from trusting in the Succour of *Egypt*; they presumptuously resolved to rely on that broken Reed. *Therefore*, says GOD, *I will*—withdraw my slighted Mercy; deny my despised Assistance. This would be the Manner of human Procedure. But the LORD's Ways are not as Man's Ways. His Long-suffering triumphs over our Perverseness. Therefore, He says, "I "will not turn away from them in Displeasure; I will "even wait for them, and wait upon them, till they see "their Error, and accept my Favour."——Amazing Condes-"cension and Goodness! I was going to say. But *divine* Condescension and Goodness are, if I may so speak, infinitely more than amazing.

† 1 Thess. ii. 12. ‡ Eph. v. 1.

a Consideration sway our Hearts?——Nay; upon what Principles can such a person address Himself to discharge any Office of the *christian* Life? We are to *abound in the Works of the LORD*, from the animating Prospect of a glorious Resurrection*. This He cannot do; because He apprehends Himself to have no Lot or Portion in the blessed Hope.——We are to open our Hands in Charity to others, from a View of that heavenly Kingdom, which was prepared for Us from the Foundation of the World†: We are to cleanse Ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, on account of those precious Promises, which are freely given to Us in *CHRIST JESUS*,‡: but where unbelieving Doubts predominate, these endearing and invigorating Motives are lost. The Man has no Interest in the encouraging Promises, has no Title to the blissful Inheritance; consequently, these Sinews of evangelical Obedience, with respect to him, are benumbed, withered, dead.

Ther. Such a Man may make Prayers and Supplications Though he cannot rejoice in the Privileges, He may request them at the Throne of Grace.

Asp. Prayer is a great Duty, and as great a Privilege. I wish my dear *Theron* the Spirit of Grace and Supplication. This will be better, incomparably better and more advantageous, than a Key to hidden Treasures. But how can You pray with humble Boldness, or with lively Hope, unless You believe? Believe, that *CHRIST* is your High Priest; is *your* Intercessor with the FATHER; and, with the Incense of his infinite Merit, presents *your* Petitions? Then, and then only, can You have, what the Apostle calls, *Boldness and Access with Confidence* §. Take notice of these vigorous Expressions; and

* 1 Cor. xv. 58.

† Matt. xxv. 34. ‡ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

§ *Eph.* iii. 12. Προσαγωγη, *Access with a chearing and graceful Assurance*; such as those Petitioners enjoy, who are introduced to the royal Presence by some distinguished Favourite.—— Παρρησια, *A Boldness or unrestrained Liberty of Speech*; such

and at your Leiſure conſider, whether they countenance the ſuſpicious and miſgiving Temper.——At preſent obſerve, how yonder Lark warbles and mounts in the Firmament; as if ſhe was bidden Adieu to the Earth, and going to mingle with the Skies. An Image *this*, of believing Prayer! Should a Fowler ſhoot the ſoaring Songſter through the Wing, how would ſhe fall from her Elevation, and flutter on the Ground! An Emblem *that*, of diſtruſting Prayer.

I know not how to leave this Subject, without attending to the Teſtimony of St. *James:* than which, nothing can be more awful, or more deciſive. It ſhould really alarm the doubting Diſpoſition, as much as any Solicitation to the moſt horrid Sin. It ſhould alarm the whole religious World, as much as the Beacons, ſuddenly kindled and all on a Flame would alarm the Inhabitants of the maritime Coaſts. *Let Him pray in Faith, nothing doubting*; for He that doubteth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven by the Wind, and toſt.* Nay; the Apoſtle adds——and it is an Addition, greatly to be regarded. It ſhould abide with Weight on our Conſciences; for it comes from a Caſuiſt, who could neither be too indulgent, through an Exceſs of Compaſſion; nor too rigorous, through an Extravagance of Zeal——*let not that Man*, the doubting Supplicant *think, that He ſhall receive any Thing of the LORD.*

Never

ſuch as Children uſe, when they preſent their Addreſſes, and make known their Requeſts, to an indulgent Father.——Εν πεποιθησει, *With a well grounded and ſteady Confidence*, that We ſhall obtain both a favourable Acceptance, and a gracious Anſwer.——And all this, *through the Faith of CHRIST*; through the Worthineſs of his Perſon, and the Prevalence of his Interceſſion.

* *Jam.* i. 6. N. B. *Nothing doubting*, is the Apoſtle's Explanation of *Faith.*——Μηδεν διακρινομενος is, in our Tranſlation, *nothing wavering.* But the very ſame Expreſſion is rendering, *Acts* x. 20. *Nothing doubting.* The Senſe is, either Way, alike. Though, I think, *Nothing wavering*, correſponds too nearly with the Compariſon, *Like a Wave*; makes ſomething of a diſagreeable Jingle; and flattens the Force, or ſuperſedes the Neceſſity, of the following Illuſtration.

Never then, my worthy Friend, never more be an Advocate for Doubtings. Purſue them with Fire and Sword. Give them no Quarter. Deal with them as *Saul* was commanded to treat the *Amalekites.*

Ther. If we are grieved at the Remembrance of *paſt* Sin, and feel an Averſion to *all* Sin; if the prevailing Bias of our Affections be to the Divine REDEEMER, and the habitual Breathing of our Souls after a Conformity to his Image; may We not ſuppoſe Ourſelves poſſeſſed of the Truth and Reality, though We have not the Confidence and rejoicing of Faith? I ſay *We*; becauſe I apprehend, this is not my peculiar Caſe, but common to myſelf and many other Chriſtians of the weaker Sort. I aſk, therefore, in their Name and in my own, May We not humbly ſuppoſe our Condition ſafe? Though We do not preſume to uſe the Language of the Spouſe; *My BELOVED is mine, and I am his.*

Aſp. So you are ſtill inclined to ſpare *Agag*; becauſe delicately and ſpeciouſly diſguiſed, under the Appearance of Tenderneſs to weak Souls. I ſhould have thought, the Text from St. *James* muſt have done Execution, like the Prophet *Samuel*'s Sword. But ſince Corroſives ſucceed not, let Us make trial of Lenitives.

When the great JEHOVAH is pleaſed to ſay *I am the LORD thy GOD*; then, upon this authentic Warrant, to uſe the Language of the Spouſe, is neither more nor leſs than to declare; "I am perſuaded, "that *CHRIST* is faithful and true. That he "ſays, what he thinks; and will do, what He ſays." Whereas, to deny this, by downright Unbelief; or to queſtion this by living in Suſpence; is not humble Duty, but proud Diſobedience. Might not the *LORD JESUS* juſtly complain, *What Iniquity have* Sinners *found in Me?* What Unkindneſs, or what Unfaithfulneſs, that they are ſo much afraid of confiding in my Grace, and of believing my Word?

You ask, Whether the State of these Persons is safe, and their Faith real? I answer; Why should not their State be *happy*, and their Faith *assured?* Why should You, or They, or any One, plead the Cause of Unbelief: and veil it with the plausible Pretext of Humility? Let these Persons know, whatever their Names or their Circumstances are, that they have as good a Right to adopt the Words of the Spouse, as We have to walk in these Gardens, and enjoy their refined Delights.——Yet they will do well to remember, that those Qualifications, however amiable, are by no means the *Ground* of their Right They are to advance their Claim, and hold fast the Blessing; not as Men ornamented with fine Endowments, but as poor, indigent, guilty Sinners. For *such* the SAVIOUR is provided; to *such* his Benefits are proposed; and on *such* his Grace will be magnified.

Ther. Do You elude my Question, or give up your Point? One or the other my *Aspasio* certainly does.

Asp. Since my Friend so peremptorily affirms, I will not have the ill Manners to deny. I will own the former Charge, the latter I cannot admit. I will own, that at present, I had much rather act as a Comforter, than as a Disputant. On some other Occasion, I will undertake to consider, and endeavour to answer, all your Objections ——In the mean time, I am far from giving up the Point, barely by inquiring; Why such Persons should lose their Time, and perhaps embarrass their Minds, in these less profitable Suppositions? When there is a direct, a compendious, and a certain Method of obtaining Peace, by appropriating *CHRIST* and his Merits; without recurring to any such Qualifications.

Nevertheless, if You insist upon a positive Reply, I am obliged to declare, that Faith consists in none of those Qualifications, which You describe. The Language of Faith is not——"I feel such an Aversion; I am actuated with such a Bias? or, I breathe "such a Desire," But—"GOD has freely loved "me; *CHRIST* has graciously died for me; and the "HOLY

" HOLY GHOST will assuredly sanctify me in the " Belief, the appropriating Belief of these precious " Truths *."

But see, *Theron!* Yonder black and low-hung Cloud points this Way. It seems big with a Shower; it marches on a-pace; and will soon be over our Heads. We must instantly fly to Shelter.

Ther. It is well we have this Summer-house for our Shelter. The thickest Boughs would be insufficient to screen Us. I think, I never saw a more impetuous Burst of Rain. A Shower! No, 'tis a descending *Deluge*. The large, ropy, reeking Drops, come down like a Torrent †.——Surprising! What a dreadful *Flash* was there! A Sheet of sulphurous Fire, launched from the dismal Gloom, and wrapping the whole Skies in a Blaze!——Not a Moment's Interval, between the Lightning's Rage, and the *thunder*'s

* If the Reader finds this Dialogue too long, *here* He will have a convenient Resting-place.

† *Come down like a Torrent.*——This is the Import of that strong picturesque Word זרמו Psal. lxxvii. 17. In this Manner, *The Clouds poured out Water; while the Air thundered; and the Arrows of the ALMIGHTY went abroad* Mr. *Addison*, if I remember right, admires the Psalmist's Description of a *Storm at Sea*; because, it dwells only upon the *grand* and *most striking* Circumstances; without descending, like *Virgil*'s enervated Representation, to such little Particulars, as the Cries of Men, and the Noise of Oars. *Clamorque Virûm, Stridorque Rudentum*-- This Description of a *Tempest* is, I think, equally admirable on the same Account. The three greatest and most terrible Peculiarities are selected; and expressed with all the Conciseness, yet with all the Vigour, which Language can unite.

I have not met with any Commentator, who enters into the Spirit of the next Verse. And in our Liturgy Translation, its Majesty sinks into Meanness, its Propriety degenerates into Tautology. Whereas, it is by no means a vain Repetition; but heightens and inlarges the formidable Idea, by displaying *the Effects* of what had been described, in the foregoing Lines. *The Voice of thy Thunder was in the Heaven*; the Vollies not only resounded, but resounded from Pole to Pole, and filled כגלגל the vast Circumference of the Skies. *The Lightnings lightened the World*; the Flashes not only shone, but shone far and near, and illuminated the whole World with their Blaze. *The Earth trembled* to its Center, *and* its Inhabitants *shook* with Horror.

Roar. How ſudden and vaſt the Exploſion! What a deep, prolonged, tremendous peal enſues! It ſeems as if the Poles of Earth, and the Pillars of Nature cracked!

See my dear *Aſpaſio!* See the direful Havock; the horrid Effects of this elementary Tumult.—— Yonder Oak, which reared its towring Head aloft, and ſpread wide its graceful Branches, is, in the Twinkling of an Eye, turned into a *naked Trunk.* There it ſtands ſinged and tore; ſtripped of its verdant Honours *, and ſurrounded with its own ſhattered Fragments. How fearful is the Artillery of Heaven!

Aſp. And why—why did not the Blow fall on this guilty Breaſt? Why was not the fiery Bolt, which flew ſo near, commiſſioned to pierce our Hearts?—If our heavenly FATHER has been ſo tenderly careful of theſe periſhing *Bodies*, will He not be much more gracious to our immortal *Souls?* Will he not clothe them with that immaculate Robe, which is the only Security from the Stroke of eternal Vengeance?—And let me aſk, can this be a Security to Us, unleſs We are veſted with it! Could this Building, though very ſubſtantial, have ſecured Us from the ruſhing Rains, if We had not betaken Ourſelves to its friendly Covert!

CHRIST is repreſented in the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, by this very Image; as *a Place of Refuge, and as a Covert from the Storm and from Rain* †. That is, His Merits and Death are a ſure Protection, from the Curſe of the Law, and the Damnation of Hell. No Fury of the Elements ſo terrible as *theſe*; no Bulwark of Stone ſo impregnable as *thoſe.*——If this is a proper

* Does not this give Us the moſt awful and grand Senſe of *Pſalm* xxix. 9? *The Voice of the LORD*, when uttered in Thunder, and accompanied with Lightning, יחשף יערות, not *diſcovereth the thick Buſhes*, but *ſtrips the Foreſts*; lays bare the branching Woods; reduces the moſt magnificent and flouriſhing Cedars to naked and withered Trunks.

† Iſai. iv. 6.

proper Emblem of *CHRIST*, to what ſhall We liken *Faith?* To a Perſuaſion, that the Shelter of the Summer-houſe is *free* for our Uſe? To a high Eſteem of its Accommodation, an earneſt Deſire after its Protection, or an Habitual Tendency towards it?—Would this defend Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather? Would this keep Us dry, amidſt (what You call) the deſcending Deluge? Would this Eſteem, Deſire, or Tendency, unleſs carried into actual Entrance and Poſſeſſion, be a proper Saſeguard, or indeed any Manner of Advantage to our Perſons?

Ther. No, *Aſpaſio*; neither would a Perſuaſion that the Summer-houſe *is mine*.

Aſp. True: but a Belief that *CHRIST* is mine, is like entering the Summer-houſe. When the Divine SPIRIT, reveals the obedient and dying SAVIOUR in my Heart; when I am enabled to believe, that his Death was the Deſert of my Sins, and his Obedience is the Matter of my Juſtification; when I live in the exerciſe of this appropriated Faith, then I find that Comfort, and I receive that Benefit, which correſpond with the Repoſe and Security, We now enjoy from this hoſpitable Structure.

Ther May I then, from this Inſtant, look upon *CHRIST*, his glorious Perſon, his perfect Righteouſneſs, and his precious Death, as my *certain* Inheritance? May I firmly believe, that through this grand and immenſely meritorious Cauſe, I ſhall have Pardon and Acceptance, true Holineſs and endleſs Salvation?

Aſp. Why ſhould You not believe all this *firmly?* You have the ſame Reaſon to believe with a ſteady Confidence, as to believe with any Degree of Affiance. It is the free Promiſe of the Goſpel, addreſſed to *Sinners*, that warrants the latter; and the very ſame Promiſe, under the ſame Circumſtances of *unmerited* Munificence, authorizes the former.

You have heard my opinion, hear now what our LORD Himſelf ſays; *Let Him that is athirſt, come, and whoſoever will, let Him take the Water of Life freely* *. He may partake of my ſpiritual and unſpeak-

able

able Bleſſings, as freely as He makes uſe of the moſt common refreſhments; as freely as He drinks of the running Stream. This is his royal Proclamation.—Hear his gracious Invitation. *Look unto Me, and be ye ſaved**; ſaved from your diſquieting Fears, by Juſtification; ſaved from your domineering Corruptions, by Sanctification; ſaved from every Evil, by complete and eternal Redemption. To whom is this moſt affectionate Call directed? Not to a few diſtinguiſhed Favourites only, but to *all the Ends of the Earth*. None are excepted; none are prohibited; and can my *Theron* imagine, that *He* is excluded?

Nay farther; Hear our LORD's earneſt Intreaty; hear his tender and repeated Importunity; *As though GOD did beſeech You by Us; We pray You in CHRIST's Stead, be ye reconciled to GOD*†. Hark! 'Tis the Voice of infinitely condeſcending Love, ſpeaking by his Ambaſſador——"Sinners, accept my great Salvation. Enjoy what I have purchaſed for You, by my dying Agonies. Do not ſuſpect my Kindneſs, or refuſe my Gifts. This will wound me deeper, than the Spear which pierced my Heart."—O! the Grace of our exalted KING. He bows from his celeſtial Throne. He almoſt kneels to his guilty Creatures. He begs, He even begs of obnoxious Sinners, not to reject his Mercies——After all this, can you entertain the leaſt Doubt, *Theron*, whether you have a Permiſſion to believe firmly?

Ther. This is extraordinary Goodneſs indeed! I have often read theſe Paſſages, but never ſaw them, till this Hour, in a Light ſo engaging, and ſo encouraging.

Aſp. Should not this three-fold Cord be ſtrong enough to draw my dear Friend; let me add (what muſt abſolutely ſuperſede all objections) the plain, expreſs, peremptory Command of the ALMIGHTY: *This is his Command, that We ſhould believe on the name of his Son JESUS CHRIST*‡. Pray, examine the Language; Not He *allows* only; or barely *adviſes*; but *commands*. We are not only permitted,

* Iſa. xlv. 22. † 2 Cor. v. 20. ‡ 1 John iii. 23.

mitted, but ſtrictly required, It is not only our Privilege, but GOD's poſitive Injunction.—Upon the Diſcovery of ſuch a SAVIOUR, methinks every Heart ſhould cry; "O! that I might be allowed to "approach him! To ſolicit an Intereſt in Him! "How gladly would I wait, ever ſo long a time, in "ever ſo mean a Poſture, if I might at the laſt re- "ceive Him as my Portion!"—The ſuperabundant Goodneſs of GOD, prevents our Wiſhes, and exceeds our Hopes. "I freely give my SON, ſaith the "LORD, and all his Riches to you. I beſeech "You, as a compaſſionate *Friend*, not to refuſe Him. "I injoin you, as an uncontroulable *Sovereign*, to be- "lieve on Him."—How gracious! moſt amazingly gracious is this Command! And give me leave to hint, it is the greateſt and moſt important command, that ever iſſued from the Throne of Glory. If this be neglected, no other can be kept; if this be obſerved, all others will be eaſy.—Now *Theron*, will You not receive *CHRIST*, and look upon his all-ſufficient Merits, as your own? Is not your Warrant clear and unexceptionable? Nay, is not your Obligation ſtrong and indiſpenſible?

Ther. Truly, *Aſpaſio*, You put all my miſtruſtful Apprehenſions to the Stand. Here is a Proclamation from the bleſſed GOD—ſeconded by his Invitation—accompanied by his Intreaty—and all inforced by his Command. I know not what can be a fuller Proof of your Point, or a ſtronger Inducement to believe.

Aſp. Yes, my Friend; I can produce (if ſuch a Thing be poſſible) ſtronger Proof ſtill. Such as, I hope, will totally rout Unbelief, and drive all her Forces from the Field.

GOD has not only invited You, intreated You, and commanded You to live under the ſweet Perſuaſion, that his SON is your SAVIOUR; but he has given you the grandeſt *Ratification* of this precious Truth.—He has paſſed his Word; He has made You a firm Promiſe; nay, He has given you *many* and *various* Promiſes, of this ineſtimable Bleſſing. And *GOD is not a Man, that He ſhould lie; or the Son of Man, that He ſhould repent. Hath He ſaid*

and ſhall He not do it? Or hath He ſpoken, and ſhall He not make it good?* Heaven and Earth may drop into Nothing, ſooner than one Promiſe, or indeed one Jot or Tittle of his Promiſe, ſhould fall to the Ground.

Beſides this, He has given You, if I may ſo ſpeak, a Note under his own Hand. He has *recorded* his Promiſes in the Bible, and *written* them with an everlaſting Pen. So that they will ſtand conſpicuous and indelible, like a Bill drawn upon Heaven, and a Baſis laid for Faith, ſo long as the Sun and Moon endure.

Nay, He has confirmed all, by the moſt ſolemn Sanction imaginable; by his *Oath*; by *his own* Oath; by the Oath of *a GOD*. Though his Word is ſure, and his Promiſe immutable, He adds (aſtoniſhing Condeſcenſion! adorable Benignity!) He adds HIS OATH to all.——He not only ſpeaks but ſwears; ſwears by Himſelf; ſwears by his own eternal Exiſtence; that his Promiſes belong——*to whom?* Mark this Particular with the moſt exact Attention. To whom do thoſe Promiſes belong, which are ratified in this unequaled and inviolable Manner?——To the Holy, the Upright, the accompliſhed?——To thoſe, ſays the Scripture, *who fly for Refuge to the Hope ſet before them* †, The Hope ſet before them in the Propitiation, the Righteouſneſs, the ineffable Merits of *CHRIST*.

Ther. May I then believe, firmly believe, aſſuredly believe, that *JESUS* the Mediator, and all the rich Benefits of his Mediation, are mine? Pardon me, *Aſpaſio*, for reiterating the Queſtion. I am really, with reſpect to the Obedience of Faith, too much like that *Saxon* Monarch, who for his Remiſſneſs and Inactivity, was ſurnamed the *Unready* ‡.

Aſp. I do more than pardon my dear *Theron*. I feel for Him, and I ſympathize with Him. If there is ſome of that *Saxon* Prince's Diſeaſe running in his

* Numb. xxiii. 19. † Heb. vi. 17, 18.

‡ ETHELRED.

his Religion; I am sure, there is too much of it in mine; and I fear, it is an *epidemical* Distemper. But let Us reflect a Moment——Suppose any Neighbour of Substance and Credit, should bind himself by a deliberate *Promise*, to do you some particular piece of Service——if he should add to his Promise a *Note* under his own Hand——if he should corroborate both by some authentic *Pledge*——if he should establish all by a most awful and solemn *Oath*—Could you suspect the Sincerity of his Engagement, or harbour any Doubt with regard to its Execution? This would be most unreasonable in any One; and to your generous Temper, I am very certain, it would be impossible.—Let us remember, that GOD has given us all this Cause for an assurance of Faith, and more. Nay; I will defy the most timorous and suspicious Temper, to demand from the *most treacherous* Person on Earth, a greater, stronger, fuller Security, than the GOD of infinite Fidelity has granted to you and me.——After all this, one would think Diffidence itself could no longer hesitate, nor the most jealous Incredulity demur. Shall we, can we withhold that Affiance from the unchangeable CREATOR, which we could not but repose on a fallible Creature?

Ther. You rouze and animate me, *Aspasio*. O! that I may arise, and with the divine Assistance, shake off this Stupor of Unbelief! Certainly it can never be honourable to GOD, nor pleasing to *CHRIST*, nor profitable to Ourselves

Asp. If it be, then cherish it; maintain it; and never relinquish it.—But how can it be *honourable to GOD?* It depreciates his Goodness; it is a Reproach to his Veracity; nay, the Apostle scruples not to affirm, that it *makes him a Liar* *. Whereas, they who believe his Testimony, glorify his Faithfulness; glorify his Beneficence; and, as *John* the Baptist speaks, *set to their Seal, that GOD is true* †.

——I

* 1 John v. 10. † John iii. 33.

—I have been informed, that, when the late *Elector* of *Hanover* was declared, by the Parliament of *Great-Britain*, Succeſſor to the vacant Throne; ſeveral Perſons of Diſtinction waited upon his Highneſs, in order to make timely Application for the moſt valuable Preferments. Several Requeſts of this Nature were granted, and each was confirmed by a kind of promiſſory Note. One Gentleman, particularly, ſolicited for the *Maſterſhip* of the *Rolls*. Being indulged in his Deſire, he was offered the ſame Confirmation, which had been vouchſafed to other ſucceſsful Petitioners. Upon which, he ſeemed to be under a Pang of graceful Confuſion and Surprize; begged, that he might not put the royal Donor to ſuch unneceſſary Trouble; at the ſame time proteſting, that he looked upon his Highneſs's *Word*, as the very beſt Ratification of his Suit.——With this Conduct, and this Compliment, the Elector was not a little pleaſed. "This is the Gentleman, he ſaid, "who does me a real Honour; treats me *like a* "*King*; and whoever is diſappointed, He ſhall cer- "tainly be gratified." So, We are aſſured by the Teſtimony of Revelation, that the Patriarch, *who ſtaggered not* through Unbelief, *gave*, in the moſt ſignal, the moſt acceptable Manner, *Glory to GOD* *.

Is it *pleaſing to CHRIST?*—Quite the reverſe. It diſhonours his Merit; it detracts from the Dignity of his Righteouſneſs; It would enervate the Power of Interceſſion. Accordingly you may obſerve, there is nothing which our LORD ſo frequently reproved in his Followers, as this Spirit of Unbelief.—What ſays He to his Diſciples, when He came down from the Mount of Transfiguration? *O faithleſs and perverſe* † *Generation!* They were

* Rom. iv. 20

† Διεστραμμενη, Matt. xvii. 17. A believing State of Mind, is like ſome *well-arranged* and beautiful Syſtem of Limbs. Unbelief *diſlocates* the Parts, *diſtorts* the harmonious Frame, and diſfigures its comely proportion.

were perverse, because faithless.——What says He to the Travellers, whom He overtook in their Journey to *Emmaus? O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe* !* They were Fools, because slow to believe.——What says He to the Apostles, after his Resurrection? *JESUS upbraided them with their Unbelief* †. He took no notice of their cowardly and perfidious Behaviour; He inveighed against none of their other Follies and Infirmities; but he upbraided them with their Unbelief. Not *gently rebuked.* No; this was a Fault so unreasonable in itself, so reproachful to their MASTER, so pernicious to themselves, that He *severely reprimanded* them for it; with an Air of Vehemence, and with a Mixture of invective.

Is it *profitable to Ourselves?*——Nothing less. It damps our Love, and diminishes our Comfort. It subjects Us to that Fear, which hath Torment; and disqualifies Us for that Obedience, which is filial. In a word; this distrustful and unbelieving Temper weakens every Principle of Piety and, impoverishes the whole Soul.—Whence come spiritual Oscitancy and Remissness? Whence proceed Sterility

* Ανοητοι, Luke xxiv. 25. Not *thoughtless*, but *stupid* Creatures; void of Understanding; as we say in *English*, *without common Sense*; or, as *Horace* would have said in *Latin*,

O tribus Anticyris Caput insanabile!

† *Mark* xvi. 14. The Word is not επιπληξεν, as in *Luke* xvii. 3. not ελεγξει, as in *Tit.* i. 13. but ωνειδισε. Which signifies, not barely a Rebuke, but a Rebuke accompanied with *keen* and *stinging* Reflections; such as may cover the Face with Blushes, and wound the Heart with Anguish.——It is used, by the Evangelist *Luke*, and by the Apostle *Peter*, to describe those Calumnies, Invectives, and Reproaches, with which the Persecutors of Christianity endeavoured to *gall* and *afflict* the Christians. *Luke* vi. 22. 1 *Pet.* iv. 14.——Though our *LORD JESUS* was most amiably tender and gentle; yet, when Severity was necessary and wholesome, He knew how to be severe. Our all-wise PHYSICIAN could apply the *Caustic*, as well as administer the *Cordial*.

Sterility and Unfruitfulneſs in the Knowledge of *CHRIST?* St. *Peter* aſcribes them all to an habitual Unbelief. Such Perſons, he ſays, *have forgotten that they were purged from their former Sins* *.—In the Regenerate, where it remains, it is very detrimental; for *they that will not believe ſhall not be eſtabliſhed* †: In the Unregenerate, where it prevails, it is abſolutely deſtructive; and though it may not kill like an Apoplexy, it waſtes like a Conſumption. *They could not enter in, becauſe of Unbelief* ‡.

Let Us then, my dear Friend, *caſt away this Sin*, which *ſo eaſily beſets Us* both. It clogs our Feet; it hampers all our Powers; and hinders Us from *running*, with Alacrity and Speed, *the Race that is ſet before Us.*——What, ſays *David? GOD hath ſpoken in his Holineſs* ‖; hath made an expreſs and inviolable Promiſe, that I ſhall be the Ruler of his People *Iſrael. I will rejoice therefore*; away with every alarming Apprehenſion; I will even exult and triumph. Nay more; *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth*; I will look upon the whole Land as my own. I will divide it, and diſpoſe of it, juſt as if it was already in my Poſſeſſion.—Why ſhould not you and I alſo ſay? *GOD hath ſpoken in his Holineſs*; hath expreſly and ſolemnly declared, *The Promiſe* of an all-ſufficient SAVIOUR *is to You. We will rejoice therefore*; confiding in this moſt faithful Word, We will bid adieu to all diſquieting Fears, and make our Boaſt of this glorious REDEEMER. Yes; notwithſtanding all our Unworthineſs, *CHRIST* and his Atonement, *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs, are ours. GOD hath paſſed his Word; and amidſt all our Temptations, his Word is our Anchor; its Hold is firm, and its Ground immoveable §.

Ther.

* 2 Pet. i. 8, 9. † Iſai. vii. 9. ‡ Heb. iii. 19.
‖ Pſal. lx. 6.

§ This very important Doctrine is more copiouſly diſplayed, in a Sermon of Mr. *Erſkine*'s on the *Aſſurance of Faith*, Vol. III. p. 201.——Was I to read, in order to refine my Taſte, or

Ther. I have heard ſome People diſtinguiſh, between the Faith of *Reliance*, and the Faith of *Aſſurance*; between the *reflex* and the *direct* Act of Faith. Methinks, I approve theſe Sentiments though I diſlike the Terms. The Sentiments are happily adapted, to the Relief of human Infirmity; though the Terms are rather too abſtruſe, for ordinary Capacities to underſtand.

Aſp. I cannot ſay, that I am very fond, either of the one, or of the other. In my Opinion, they both partake too much of the Subtilty of the Schools; and are more likely to create Perplexity, than to adminiſter godly Edifying. For which Reaſon, I ſhould chooſe to drop the difficult Phraſes, and not to dwell on the nice Diſtinctions. Yet, if We muſt not diſmiſs them, without ſome Notice, I would juſt remark—

That the Faith of *Reliance*, in its true ſcriptural Senſe, includes or preſuppoſes a Degree of Aſſurance — *Includes*; for what is Reliance, but a Repoſe of the Mind, which is attended with Tranquillity, and excludes Perturbation? How can this take place, if there be no Sort of Conviction, That *the LORD is my Light and my Salvation?* — *Preſuppoſes*; for, who would rely on a Satisfaction made, without being perſuaded, that the Satisfaction is for Him and his Iniquities? Reliance, ſeparated from this Perſuaſion, ſeems to be neither comfortable, nor reaſonable.

As to thoſe, who inſiſt upon what they call the *reflex* Act of Faith; ſure, they miſtake the Nature of the Thing. This, if I underſtand them aright, is their Way of arguing; "I am a new Creature; "I love the *LORD JESUS* in Sincerity; I have "the Fruits of the SPIRIT. From whence it is "plain, that *CHRIST* and his Salvation are mine." Now, in all this Procedure, I cannot diſcern the leaſt Foot-

or improve my Style; I would prefer Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Dr. *Bates*'s Works, or Mr. *Seed*'s Diſcourſes. But was I to read, with a ſingle View to the Edification of my Heart, in true Faith, ſolid Comfort, and evangelical Holineſs; I would have recourſe to Mr. *Erſkine*, and take his Volumes for *my Guide, my Companion, and my own familiar Friend.*

Footstep of Faith; no not the least Trace of receiving a Testimony, or relying upon a SAVIOUR. Here is nothing more than a logical Deduction of one Proposition from another; a Conclusion drawn from given Premises. Grant the latter, and any Person, without any Aid from the SPIRIT, will infer the former. It may, therefore, more properly be reckoned an Act of Reasoning, than of Believing; it is founded on what We Ourselves *feel*, not upon the *Record* of a faithful GOD; and it is styled, by judicious Writers, the Assurance of *Sense* rather than of Faith.

When, in Conformity to the afore-mentioned Opinion, We are advised to prove our Title to Comfort, by genuine Marks of Conversion; and taught, on this Column to fix the Capital of Assurance; I would rather propose a Question, than advance Objections—Is not this somewhat like placing the Dome of a Cathedral, upon the Stalk of a Tulip?

Ther. No, say They; it was the Practice of the Apostle Himself; and He has left it upon Record, as a Pattern for all Posterity to copy. *We know that We are passed from Death unto Life, because We love the Brethren.*

Asp. Observe, *Theron*, the Process of the Apostle's Reasoning. It is like the Form of an inverted Cone; where You have first the Point, and from thence proceed to the Base. So the sacred Writer begins with the less, and ascends to the greater Proof. He says, in one of the following Verses; *Hereby perceive We the Love of GOD*, because He laid down his Life*, not merely

* 1 *John* iii. 16. The Word *GOD* is not in the Original. It was omitted by the Apostle, just as the particular Name is omitted by *Mary*, when She speaks to the Gardener; *Sir, if thou hast borne* Him *hence*—and by the *Church*, when She addresses the sacred Object of her Affection; *Let* Him *kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth:* John xx. 15. Cantic. i. 1.—In all which Places, there is a Language, a very emphatical Language, even in the Silence. It declares, how deeply the Heart was penetrated, how totally the Thoughts were possessed, by the beloved and illustrious Subject. It expresses also the superlative Dignity and Amiableness of

merely for Sinners, but *for Us* in particular.—Here, You ſee, is Aſſurance by the direct Act of Faith. From this Truth believed, from this Bleſſing received, the Love of the Brethren takes its Riſe. Which may very juſtly be admitted as an Evidence, that our Faith is real, and our Aſſurance no Deluſion. As yónder Leaves may ſerve to diſtinguiſh the particular Species, and aſcertain the healthy State of the Trees on which they grow.

When your Tenants bring in their Rents, this affords no contemptible Evidence, that the Lands, which they reſpectively occupy, are yours. But this is a Proof which does not occur, either every Day or every Week; it is occaſional only, and of the ſubordinate Kind.—The *grand* Demonſtration, that which is always at hand, and always forcible is, your Poſſeſſion of the *Deeds* of Conveyance. Thus, the Promiſe of GOD in his divine Word is our Charter, or the authentic Conveyance of our Right to Pardon and Salvation. Make juſt the ſame Difference between this Promiſe and your own Holineſs, as You make between the Writings of your Eſtate and the Receival of the Revenues, You will then judge aright, becauſe your Judgment will coincide with the Apoſtle's.

Beſides; this Method of ſeeking Peace and Aſſurance, I fear, will perplex the Simple-minded; and cheriſh, rather than ſuppreſs, the Fluctuations of Doubt. For, let the Marks be what You pleaſe, a Love of the Brethren, or a Love of all Righteouſneſs, a Change of Heart or an Alteration of Life; theſe good Qualifications are ſometimes like the Stars at Noon-Day, *not eaſily*, if at all, diſcernable; or elſe they are like a Glow-worm in the Night, *glimmering*, rather than ſhining. Conſequently will yield, at the beſt, but a feeble, at the worſt, a very precarious Evidence.—If, in ſuch a manner, We ſhould acquire ſome little Aſſurance, how ſoon may it be unſettled by the

of the Perſon meant: as though *He*, and He *alone*, either was, or deſerved to be, known and admired by *All*. For which Reaſon, to mention his Name, or diſplay his Excellencies, ſeemed as *needleſs*, as to ſhew Light to the opened Eye.

the Incurſions of daily Temptation, or deſtroyed by the Inſurrection of remaining Sin! At ſuch a Juncture, how will it keep its Standing! How retain its Being! It will fare like a tottering Wall, before the Tempeſt; or be *as the Ruſh without Mire, and the Flag without Water* *.

Inſtead therefore of poring on our own Hearts, to diſcover, by inherent Qualities our Intereſt in *CHRIST*, I ſhould rather renew my Application to the free and faithful Promiſe of the LORD; aſſert and maintain my Title, on this *unalterable* Ground.—"Pardon is "mine, I would ſay, Grace is mine, *CHRIST* and all "his ſpiritual Bleſſings are mine. Why? becauſe I "am conſcious of ſanctifying Operations in my own "Breaſt? Rather becauſe *GOD hath ſpoken in his Ho-* "*lineſs*; becauſe all theſe precious Privileges are con- "ſigned over to me in the everlaſting Goſpel, with a "*Clearneſs* unqueſtionable as the Truth, with a *Cer-* "*tainty* inviolable as the Oath of GOD."

Caſt your Eye into yonder Meadow. Take notice of that induſtrious *Fiſherman*; how intent He is upon the Purſuit of his Buſineſs. He has juſt thrown his Net, and taken a conſiderable Booty. You do not ſee Him ſpending his Time in idle Triumphs, on account of his Succeſs. He does not ſtand to meaſure the Dimenſions of the Fiſh, or compute the Value of his Prize. But having, without Delay, ſecured the Captives; He prepares for *another* Caſt, and hopes for *another* Draught.

So let Us, inſtead of exulting in any paſt Acquiſitions, ſeek afreſh to the inexhauſtible Fulneſs of our SAVIOUR, for renewed Communications. If we have been bleſſed with any Taſte of his Goodneſs, or any Tokens of his Love, let Us not too fondly dote upon the Sweetneſs of ſuch Experiences. Let Us not make them the Foundation of our Confidence, but only ſo many Encouragements to perſevere and advance in believing. That, having Life and having Peace from our Divine HEAD, we may have them *more abundantly* †. Then will be fulfilled the Saying which

* Job viii. 11. † John x. 10.

which is written; *The Juſt*, the Righteous in *JESUS CHRIST—ſhall live*, ſhall not only be delivered from Condemnation and Death, but ſhall thrive in Comfort, and flouriſh in Holineſs—How? By reflecting on their Sanctification, or viewing their own Attainments? No; but by the infinitely more encouraging Views of their Completeneſs in *CHRIST*, and *by* a freſh, a repeated, a never-ceaſing Exerciſe of *Faith* *, on that HOLY ONE of GOD.

This, I verily think, nay this, the Apoſtle teſtifies, is the *moſt effectual* Way of feeding that Lamp, and quickening that Flame; which, having cheared Us in our earthly Pilgrimage, will be brightened up into immortal Glory in the Heavens.

Here they went in; and, after a ſlight Refreſhment, took Coach.—As they were returning Home, *Theron* obſerved, not without Concern, the changed and melancholy Aſpect of Things, in the Territories of the Huſbandman. The Fields of Corn, which, a little while ago, were gracefully erect, or ſoftly inclining to the Breeze, lay ſunk and flatted under the impetuous Rains—Such, added *Aſpaſio*, ſuch, I apprehend, will be our Faith, if it aſpires not after Aſſurance, or if its Aſſurance is erected on any Endowments of our own.

Ther. If this is the Caſe, what can be the Reaſon, why ſo many People are totally deſtitute of all religious Aſſurance? Have no Notion of it, much leſs aſpire after it? And as to *full* Aſſurance, they would be much ſurpriſed, perhaps highly diſguſted, at the very Mention of ſuch a Doctrine.

Aſp. If People never aſpire after the Aſſurance of Faith, or an *appropriating* Intereſt in *CHRIST*, I very much queſtion, whether they are truly awakened, or really in earneſt. They are like the Men of *Ephraim*, whom the Prophet ſtyles *a Cake not turned* †; neither Bread, nor yet Dough; neither abſolute Reprobates, nor real Saints. Or, as our LORD explains the Proverb, in his Charge againſt the Church of

* Rom. i. 17. † Hoſ. vii. 8.

of *Laodicea*, They are *neither hot nor cold** ; not frozen in Insensibility, 'tis true ; at the same Time, not fervent in Spirit ; but indifferent and lukewarm in the Concerns of Religion —As to a *full* Assurance, or the highest Degree of this Grace, was I to declare myself more explicitly upon this Point, it should be in the calm and moderate Words of a judicious Divine ; " I do not affirm that, without a *full* Assurance, there " is no Faith. But this I maintain, that, where ever " the latter exists, there will be a sincere Pursuit of " the former."

Among the Reasons, why so few Persons attain this eminent Blessing, We may reckon the following.— They understand not the perfect *Freeness* of Grace, nor the *immense* Merits of *CHRIST*.—They never consider the unspeakable *Value* of an assured Faith ; neither are they aware, that it is intended for the Enjoyment of *Sinners*.—Either they seek it not at all ; or else they seek it, where it is not to be found ; from some Works of Righteousness in themselves, rather than from the gracious Promise of GOD in his Word. Which is altogether as ill judged, and as sure to issue in Disappointment, as if a Person should go in quest of Ice amidst the torrid Zone, or expect to find spicy Islands under the northern Pole.

But whether People consider it or no, the Value of an assured Faith is indeed unspeakable. When this is wrought in the Heart, Peace will stand firm, and Afflictions drop their Sting. Prayer will return laden with Treasures, and Death will approach stripped of its Terrors. The Soul will be *as a watered Garden*, and all her Graces *blossom as a Rose*.—When this is wrought in the Heart, the Gospel of *CHRIST*, will appear with new Charms, and operate with new Energy. Its Hymns will no longer be a strange Language to your Ear, nor its Privileges as forbidden Fruit to your Palate. You will then, as You peruse each sacred Page, feel it to be the Power of GOD, and *taste that the LORD is gracious* †. You will reap a Benefit, and

* Rev. iii. 15. † 1 Pet. ii. 3.

and enjoy a Delight, as much ſuperior to thoſe of the doubting Reader, as the Pleaſure of *eating* this delicious Peach is ſuperior to the mere Deſcription of its agreeable Reliſh.

Bear with me a Moment longer, *Theron*. For You can hardly imagine, what an Improvement and Exaltation this will give, to every *Truth* You contemplate, the Riſe of Kingdoms, and the Fall of Empires; when You recollect the many great and aſtoniſhing Events, recorded in the Hiſtory of Nations; how highly delightful muſt it be to ſay, "All theſe paſſed under the "Superintendency of *that Hand*, which was pierced "with the bloody Nail, and faſtened to the curſed "Croſs for Me."—When You behold the Magnificence of Creation, and the Richneſs of its Furniture; the Grandeur of Nature, and the Variety of her Works; what a heightened Pleaſure muſt they all impart, if, as You view the glorious Scene, your Thoughts make Anſwer to your Eyes; "All theſe "were brought into Exiſtence by *that adorable PER-*"*SON*, who ſuſtained my Guilt, and wrought out my "juſtifying Righteouſneſs."

O! that We may poſſeſs this *precious Faith* *! That it may grow inceſſantly, *grow exceedingly* † ! Till it be *rooted*, like thoſe full-grown Oaks, under which We lately walked! and *grounded* ‡, like that well-built Edifice, which is ſtill in our View!

Ther. I join with my *Aſpaſio* in this Wiſh; and muſt beg of Him to inform me, how I may attain ſo deſirable a Bleſſing.

Aſp. You have intirely cured me, *Theron*, of making Apologies: Would to GOD, I might be as ſucceſsfully inſtrumental, in delivering my Friend from his Doubts! That the Goſpel might come to Us, as it came to the *Theſſalonians*, *not in Word only*, *but in Power*, *and in the HOLY GHOST*, *and in much Aſſurance* ‖!

* 2 Pet. i. 1. † 2 Theſſ. i. 3.

‡ *Rooted and grounded*, ερριζωμενοι και τεθεμελιωμενοι. Theſe are the Apoſtle's beautiful Iceni, or rather expreſſive Similitudes, each comprehended in a ſingle Word. *Eph*. iii. 18.

Prayer is the first Expedient. Every good Gift is from above, and cometh down from the FATHER of Lights. *CHRIST* is not only the Object, but the Author and Finisher of our Faith. *LORD, increase our Faith*, was the Request of the Disciples, and should be the prevailing Language of our Hearts.

Lay up many of the divine *Promises* in your Memory. Stock that noble Cabinet with this invaluable Treasure. *Faith cometh by hearing* *, by meditating on, by praying over, this Word of Life, and Word of Grace.—And never, never forget the *Freeness*, with which the Promise is made, and its good Things are bestowed. You are to receive the one, and apply the other, not with a full, but with an empty Hand; not as a righteous Person, but as an unworthy Creature.

Make the Trial. Exercise Yourself in this great Secret of true Godliness. I am satisfied, it will be productive of the most beneficial Effects.—Look unto *JESUS* as dying in *your* Stead, and purchasing both Grace and Glory for *your* Enjoyment. Come unto GOD, as a poor Sinner, yet with a *confident* Dependence; expecting all spiritual Blessings, through HIM that loved *You*, and gave Himself for *You*.—*He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *shall not be confounded* †, nor frustrated in his Expectations. *He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *shall have the Witness in himself* ‡. Nothing will bring in such Light and Peace, such Holiness and Happiness to his Soul.—The *Ephesians*, thus believing, *were sealed with that Holy SPIRIT of Promise* §. The dispersed of *Israel*, thus believing, *rejoiced with Joy unspeakable.*

* *Rom.* x. 17. On which Account the Scriptures are styled, *The Words of Faith*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 6.

† 1 Pet. ii. 6. ‡ 1 John v. 10.

§ *Eph.* i. 13. Πιστευσαντες εσφραγισθητε, not *After that Ye believed, Ye were sealed*; but *Believing Ye were sealed.* In the Way of Believing, Ye became Partakers of this sealing and sanctifying SPIRIT. Conformably to the Expostulation of the Apostle on another Occasion, *Received Ye the SPIRIT, by the Works of the Law, or by the Hearing of Faith?*

ſpeakable *. Thoſe were *marked out* as rightful Heirs, Theſe were bleſſed with ſome delightful *Foretaſtes*, and both were prepared for the complete Fruition of Life and Immortality. Oh! that We may *be Followers of their Example, and Sharers of their Felicity!*

As for thoſe Doubts, which have given You ſo much Perplexity, and coſt Us ſo long a Diſquiſition, look upon them as ſome of your *greateſt Enemies*. Oppoſe them, with all the Reſolution and all the Vigour of your Mind.—Nay; look upon thoſe unreaſonable Doubts, as ſome of your *greateſt Sins*. Confeſs them, with the deepeſt Shame; and pray againſt them, with the utmoſt Ardour.——With equal Aſſiduity and Zeal, let Us preſs after a ſtedfaſt, an immoveable, a triumphant Faith.—Faith is the Vehicle and the Inſtrument of every Good; *All Things are poſſible to Him that believeth* †.—Faith is the immediate and grand End of the whole Goſpel; *Theſe Things are written, that Ye might believe* ‡.—Let Us therefore covet, earneſtly let Us covet this beſt of Gifts, and *ſhew all Diligence to the* FULL ASSURANCE *of Hope* §.

DIALOGUE XVII.

THE next Morning, *Theron* ordered a cold Collation to be prepared, and his Pleaſure-Boat to hold itſelf in Readineſs.—Breakfaſt being diſpatched, and ſome neceſſary Orders, relating to the Family, given—Now, ſays He to *Aſpaſio*, let me fulfil my Promiſe; or rather let us execute our mutual Engagement; and conſign the Remainder of this mild and charming Day, to a rural Excurſion.

We will take our Route along one of the *fineſt Roads* in the World. A Road, incomparably more curious and durable, than the famous Cauſeys raiſed by thoſe puiſſant Hands, which conquered the Globe. A Road, which has ſubſiſted from the Beginning of

* 1 Pet. i. 8.
† Mark ix. 23.
‡ John xx. 31.
§ Heb. vii. 11.

Time; and, though frequented by innumerable Carriages, laden with the heavieſt Burdens, has never been gulled, never wanted Repair, to this very Hour. —Upon this, they ſtep into the Chariot, and are conveyed to a large *navigable River*, about three Quarters of a Mile diſtant from the Houſe.——Here they launch upon a new Element, attended by two or three Servants, expert at handling the Oar, and managing the Nets.

Is this the Road, replied *Aſpaſio*, on which my Friend beſtows his Panegyric? It is indeed more curious in its Structure, and more durable in its Subſtance, than the celebrated *Roman* Cauſeys. Though I muſt aſſure you, the latter have a diſtinguiſhed Share of my Eſteem. I admire them far beyond *Trajan*'s Pillar, or *Caracalla*'s Baths; far beyond the idle Pomp of the *Pantheon*, or the worſe than idle Magnificence of the *Amphitheatre*. They do the trueſt Honour to the Empire; becauſe, while they were the Glory of *Rome*, they were a general Good *; and not only a Monument of her Grandeur, but a Benefit to Mankind.

But more than all theſe Works, I admire that excellent and divinely gracious Purpoſe, to which Providence made the Empire itſelf ſubſervient. It was a kind of Road or Cauſey, for the everlaſting Goſpel; and afforded the Word of Life a free Paſſage, to the very Ends of the Earth. The *evangelical* Dove mounted the Wings of the *Roman* Eagle; and flew, with ſurpriſing Expedition, through all Nations.—— Who would have thought, that inſatiable Ambition and the moſt bloody Wars, ſhould be paving a Way for the PRINCE of Humility and Peace? How remote from all human Apprehenſion, was ſuch a Deſign;

* Theſe Roads ran through all *Italy*, and ſtretched themſelves into the Territories of *France*. They were carried acroſs the *Alps*, the *Pyrenean* Mountains, and through the whole Kingdom of *Spain*. Some of them, towards the South, reached even to *Æthiopia*; and ſome of them, towards the North, extended as far as *Scotland*. The Remains of ſeveral of them continue in *England* to this Day; though they were made, it is probable, above 1600 Years ago.

ſign; and how contrary to the natural Reſult of Things, was ſuch an Event! Moſt remarkably therefore was that Obſervation of the Pſalmiſt verified: *His Ways are in the Sea, and his Paths in the great Waters, and his Footſteps are not known* *.

Converſing on ſuch agreeable Subjects, they were carried by the Stream, through no leſs agreeable Scenes. They paſs by Hills, clothed with hanging Woods; and Woods arrayed in varying Green. Here, excluded from a Sight of the outſtretched Plains, they are entertained with a Group of *unſubſtantial* Images, and the wonders of a *mimic* Creation.—Another Sun ſhines, but ſtript of his blazing Beams, in the watery Concave: while Clouds ſail along the downward Skies, and ſometimes diſcloſe, ſometimes draw a Veil over, the radiant Orb. Trees, with their inverted Tops, either flouriſh in the fair Serene below; or elſe, paint, with a pleaſing deluſion the pellucid Flood. Even the Mountains are there, but in a headlong Poſture; and, notwithſtanding their prodigious Bulk, they quiver in this floating Mirror, like the poplar Leaves which adorn their Sides.

Soon as the Boat advances, and diſturbs the placid Surface; the Waves, puſhed haſtily to the Bank, bear off in broken Fragments, the *liquid Landſcape*. The ſpreading Circles ſeemed to prophecy, as they rolled; and pronounced the pleaſures of this preſent State—the Pomp of Power, the Charm of Beauty, and the Echo of Fame—pronounced them *tranſient*, as their ſpeedy Paſſage; *empty*, as their unreal Freight.—Seemed to prophecy? It was more. Imagination heard them utter, as they ran;

Thus paſs the ſhadowy Scenes of Life away!

Emerging from this fluid Alley, they dart amidſt the Level of a ſpacious Meadow. The Eye, lately *immured*, though in pleaſurable Confinement, now expands her delighted View, into a Space almoſt boundleſs, and amidſt Objects little ſhort of innumerable.—

* Pſal. lxxvii. 19.

Tranſported for a while, at the numberleſs Variety of beauteous Images, poured in ſweet Confuſion all around, ſhe hardly knows, where to fix, or which to purſue. Recovering, at length, from the pleaſing Perplexity; ſhe glances, quick and inſtantaneous, acroſs all the intermediate Plain, and marks the diſtant *Mountains*. How Cliffs climb over Cliffs, till the huge Ridges gain upon the Sky: how their diminiſhed Tops are dreſſed in Blue, or wrapped in Clouds: while all their leafy Structures, and all their fleecy Tenants, are loſt in Air.

Soon ſhe quits theſe aerial Summits, and ranges the ruſſet *Heath:* here, ſhagged with Brakes, or tufted with Ruſhes: there interſperſed with ſtraggling Thickets, or ſolitary Trees; which ſeem, like diſaffected Partiſans, to ſhun each other's Shade.—A *Spire*, placed in a remote valley, peeps over the Hills. *Senſe* is ſurpriſed at the amuſive Appearance; is ready to ſuſpect, that the Column riſes, like ſome inchanted Edifice, from the rifted Earth. But *Reaſon* looks upon it as the Earneſt of a hidden Vale, and the ſure Indication of an adjacent Town. Performing in this Reſpect, much the ſame Office to the Eye, as *Faith* executes with regard to the Soul, when it is *the Evidence of Things not ſeen* *.

Next, ſhe roves, with increaſing Pleaſure, over ſpacious Tracts of fertile Glebe, and cultured *Fields*. Where Cattle, of every graceful Form, and every valuable Quality, crop the tender Herb, or drink the cryſtal Rills.—Anon, ſhe dwells with the utmoſt Complacency, on *Towns* of Opulence and Splendor; which ſpread the ſacred Dome, and lift the ſocial Roof. Towns, no longer ſurrounded with the ſtern forbidding Majeſty of unpaſſable Intrenchments, and impregnable Ramparts; but incircled with the delicate, the inviting Appendages of Gardens and Orchards: *thoſe*, decked with all the ſoft Graces of Art and Elegance; *theſe*, bluſhing and pregnant with the more ſubſtantial Treaſures of fruitful Nature.—Wreaths of aſcending Smoke, intermingled with Turrets and lofty Pinacles, ſeem

* Heb. xi. 1.

seem to contend which shall get *farthest* from the Earth, and *nearest* to the Skies. Happy for the Inhabitants! If such was the habitual Tendency of their Desires*; if no other Contention was known in their Streets.

Villas, elegant and magnificent, seated in the Center of an ample Park, or removed to the Extremity of a lengthened Lawn: not far from a beautiful Reservoir of standing Waters, or the more salutary Lapse of a limpid Stream.—*Villages*, clad in homely Thatch, and lodged in the Bosom of clustering Trees. Rustics, singing at their Works; Shepherds tuning their Pipes, as they tend their Flocks; Travellers, pursuing each his respective Way, in easy and joyous Security.

How pleasing, said *Aspasio*, is *our* Situation! How delightful is the Aspect of all Things! One would almost

* This Comparison, I think, cannot appear vulgar to those Persons, who have read, and who reverence, *The Book of Canticles*. There, the Church, ascending continually in devout Affections, to her beloved *JESUS*, and to her heavenly Home, is characterized by this very Similitude. *Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderness like Pillars of Smoke?* Cant. iii. 6.—Though it must be confessed, that this Similitude, like many of the Illustrations used in Scripture, might have a Sort of *local* Propriety; peculiar to the People of that Age, Country, and Religion. It might probably refer to those Columns of Smoke, which arose from the *Burnt-offering*, or fumed from the Altar of *Incense*. If so, this Circumstance must give a Solemnity and Dignity to the Idea, of which many Readers are not at all aware, and which indeed no modern Reader can fully conceive.

May I take leave to mention another Comparison of this Kind? *The Enemies of the LORD shall consume as the Fat of Lambs; yea, even as the Smoke shall they consume away.* Psal. xxxvii. 20. —*As the Fat of Lambs*, is not to *Us* a striking Representation. But to those who attended the Altar, who saw the unctuous and most combustible Parts of the Victim blazing in the sacred Fire, it presented a very lively Image. Which was still more apposite and significant, if this *Psalm* was sung, while the Sacrifice was burning.——None, I believe, in such a Case, could forbear either observing or admiring the beautiful *Gradation*: "They "shall perish as yonder *Fat*, which is so easily set on fire; and, "when once in a Flame, is so speedily consumed. Nay, they "shall be as the *Smoke*, which is still more transient. Whose "light unsubstantial Wreaths, but just make their Appearance to the Eye; and, in a Moment, vanish into empty Air."

moſt imagine, that nothing could exceed it, and that nothing can increaſe it. Yet there is a Method of *increaſing* even this copious Delight, and of *heightening* even this exquiſite Pleaſure.—Let me deſire my Friend, anſwered *Theron*, to explain his Remark; and not only to explain, but to exemplify.—If We view, reſumed *Aſpaſio*, our own *proſperous*, and compare it with the *afflicted* Condition of Others, the Method I propoſe, will be reduced to Practice. Such a dark and mournful Contraſt, muſt throw additional Brightneſs, even upon the brighteſt Scene.

Above, the Skies ſmile with Serenity; below, the Fields look gay with Plenty; all around, the ſportive Gales

> *Fanning their odoriferous Wings, diſpenſe*
> *Native Perfumes; and whiſper, whence they ſtole*
> *Thoſe balmy Spoils*.*

With Us all Circumſtances are as *eaſy*, as the Wafture of the Boat; as *ſmooth*, as the *Flow* of the Stream. —But let us not forget thoſe grievous Calamities, which befal our Brethren, in ſome remote Tracts of the Earth, or diſtant Parts of the Ocean. How many Sailors are ſtruggling, vainly ſtruggling, with all the Fury of rending Winds and daſhing Waves! While their Veſſel, flung to and fro by *tempeſtuous* Billows, is mounted into the Clouds, or plunged into the Abyſs. Poſſibly, the miſerable Crew hear their Knell ſounded, in the ſhattered Maſt; and ſee Deſtruction entering, at the burſting Planks. Perhaps, this very Moment, they pour the laſt, diſmal, dying Shriek; and ſink, irrecoverably ſink, in the all-overwhelming Surge.—The Traveller, in *Africa*'s barren Waſtes, pale even amidſt thoſe glowing Regions, pale with prodigious Conſternation, ſees ſudden and ſurprizing Mountains riſe. Sees the ſultry Deſart, aſcending the Sky, and ſweeping before the Whirlwind. What can he do? Whither fly? How eſcape the approaching Ruin? Alas! while He attempts to rally his Thoughts; attempts to deviſe ſome

* MILTON, Book IV.

ſome feeble Expedient; He is overtaken by the choking Storm, and ſuffocated amidſt the *ſandy Inundation*. The driving Heaps are, now, his Executioner; as the drifted Heaps will, ſoon, be his Tomb.

While *We* poſſeſs the valuable Privileges, and taſte the delicious Sweets of *Liberty*, how many Partakers of our common Nature, are condemned to perpetual Exile, or chained to the Oar for Life! How many are immured in the Gloom of Dungeons, or buried in the Caverns of Mines; never to behold the all-enlivening Sun again!—While Reſpect waits upon our Perſons, and Reputation attends our Characters: are there not ſome unhappy Creatures, led forth by the Hand of *vindictive Juſtice*, to be Spectacles of Horror, and Monuments of Vengeance? Sentenced, for their enormous Crimes, to be broke Limb by Limb on the Wheel, or to be impaled alive on the lingering Stake. To theſe, the ſtrangling Cord, or the deadly Stab, would be a moſt welcome Favour. But they muſt feel a *thouſand* Deaths, in undergoing *one*. And this, too probably, is but the Beginning of their Sorrows; will only conſign them over to infinitely more terrible Torment.

While Eaſe and Pleaſure, in ſweet Conjunction, ſmooth our Paths, and ſoften our Couch: how many are toſſing on the Fever's fiery Bed, or toiling along Affliction's thorny Road! Some under the *excruciating*, but neceſſary Operations of Surgery: their Bodies ripped open, with a dreadful Inciſion, to ſearch for the torturing Stone; or the Limbs lopped off by the bloody Knife to prevent the Mortification's fatal Spread. Some *emaciated* by pining Sickneſs, are deprived of all their animal Vigour; and transformed into Spectres, even before their Diſſolution*. Theſe are ready to adopt the Complaint of the *Pſalmiſt*; *I am withered like Graſs; my Bones are burnt up, as it were a Firebrand; I go*

* A very little Excurſion of Thought will eaſily convince the Reader that there is no Period of Time, in which ſome of theſe Calamities do not befal our Fellow-creatures, in one Part of the World or another.

hence like the Shadow that departeth. While *Hea'th*, that ſtaple Bleſſing; which gives every other Entertainment its Flavour and its Beauty; adds the Gloſs to all We ſee, and the Gout to all We taſte; Health plays at our Hearts; dances in our Spirits; and mantles in our Cheeks, as the generous Champain lately ſparkled in our Glaſs.

We are bleſt with a calm Poſſeſſion of Ourſelves; with Tranquillity in our Conſciences, and an habitual Harmony in our Temper. Whereas Many, in the doleful *Cells* of *Lunacy*, are gnaſhing their Teeth or wringing their Hands; rending the Air with Vollies of horrid Execrations, or burdening it with Peals of diſconſolate Sighs. And O! what Multitudes, even amidſt Courts and Palaces, are held in *ſplendid Vaſſalage*, by their own domineering Paſſions, or the Vanities of a bewitching World. Far leſs innocently, far more deplorably diſordered *, than the fettered Madman, they are gnawed by the envenomed Tooth of Envy; they are agitated by the wild Sallies of Ambition; or feel the malignant Ulcer of Jealouſy, rankling in their Breaſts. In Some, Avarice, like a ravening Harpy, gripes. In Some, Revenge, like an implacable Fury, rages. While Others are goaded by lordly and imperious Luſts, through the loathſome *Sewers* of impure Delight; and left, at laſt, in thoſe hated and execrable *Dens*, where Remorſe rears her ſnaky Creſt, and Infamy ſharpens her hiſſing Tongue. —— ——

Why

* *Give me any Plague*, ſays an apocryphal Writer, *but the Plague of the Heart*, Eccluſ. xxv. 13. Upon which judicious and weighty Apophthegm, *Maſiniſſa*'s Speech in Mr. *Thomſon*'s *Sophoniſba*, is a very pertinent and affecting Paraphraſe.

O! ſave me from the Tumult of the Soul!
From the wild Beaſt within!—For, circling Sands,
When the ſwift Whirlwind whelms them o'er the Lands;
The roaring Deeps, that to the Clouds ariſe,
While thwarting thick the mingled Lightning flies;
The Monſter-brood, to which this Land gives Birth,
The blazing City, and the gaping Earth;
All Deaths, all Tortures in one Pang combin'd,
Are gentle *to the Tempeſt of the Mind.*

Why this long Pauſe? replied *Theron*. Your Obſervations are as uſeful, as they are juſt. We ſhould all be acquainted, at leaſt in Speculation acquainted, with Grief; and ſend our Thoughts, if not our Feet, to viſit the Abodes of Sorrow.—That, in this School, We may learn a ſympathizing Pity, for our diſtreſſed Fellow-creatures; and ſee, in this Glaſs, our inexpreſſible Obligations to the diſtinguiſhing Goodneſs of Providence. Which has crowned our Table with Abundance, and repleniſhed our Cup with Delicacies; permitting neither Penury to ſtint the Draught, nor Adverſity to mingle her Gall.——Go on, I muſt intreat You, with your Deſcription of *comparative Felicity*. We have a large Circuit ſtill to make, before We arrive at our intended Port. And I could wiſh, that your Diſcourſe might keep pace with the Current.

Since you approve the Subject, anſwered *Aſpaſio*, I will purſue it a little farther.—We, the Inhabitants of this favoured Iſle, breathe an Air of the moſt *agreeable* Temperature, and moſt *wholeſome* Qualities. But how many Nations languiſh under brazen Skies, vaulted as it were with Fire? They welter amidſt thoſe Furnaces of the Sun, till their "Viſage is burnt, "and black as a Coal *."——What is far more diſaſtrous, Beds of Sulphur and combuſtible Materials, lie in ſubterraneous Ambuſh, ready to ſpring the *irreſiſtible Mine*. Ere long—perhaps, on ſome Day of univerſal Feſtivity †, or in ſome Night of deep Repoſe —to

* Lam. iv. 8.

† There is a remarkable Paſſage in *Pſal.* lviii. 9. which ſeems to denote ſome ſuch *unexpected*, but *ſpeedy* and *inevitable* Doom. The Senſe is darkened, not a little, by the Verſion admitted into our Liturgy. I believe, the true Tranſlation may be ſeen in the following *Italics*, and the true Meaning learnt from the *interwoven* Paraphraſe.——Speedily, or *before your Pots can perceive the* Warmth of blazing *Thorns*, *ſhall HE* that ruleth over all, ſweep away the Wicked: *ſweep him away by* a Stroke of righteous *Indignation*, as by a fierce and mighty Tempeſt; ſo that, *even from* the Fulneſs of his Sufficiency, and the Height of his *Proſperity*, He ſhall be plunged into utter Deſtruction.—The Word חַי, which is very unhappily rendered *raw*, ſignifies a State of *Proſperity* or *pleaſurable*

—to be touched by Heaven's avenging Hand.—Then, with what outrageous Violence will they burſt! Rock the Foundations of Nature! Wrench open the ponderous Jaws of Earth! And ſwallow up aſtoniſhed Cities, in the dark, tremendous, cloſing Chaſm!

Theſe *Earthquakes*, it may be, both precede and portend, *the Peſtilence that walketh in Darkneſs, and the Sickneſs that deſtroyeth at Noon-day* *. They are, at once, a fearful Omen, and a ruinous Blow. The ſtagnating Atmoſphere, rank with malignant Vapours, becomes a Source of deadly Infection: or, replete with poiſonous Animalcules, is one vaſt incumbent Cloud of *living Bane*. If the active Gales ariſe, they ariſe only to ſtir the Seeds of Diſeaſe, and diffuſe the fatal Contagion far and near.—Unhappy People! The *Plague*, that ſevere Miniſter of divine Indignation, fixes her Head quarters in their blaſted Provinces; and ſends Death abroad, on his pale Horſe †, to empty their Houſes, depopulate their Towns, and their Graves.

Our Iſland is ſeldom viſited with either of theſe dreadful Judgments; and has never ſuſtained any very conſiderable Calamity from the former. However, let Us not be preſumptuouſly ſecure. We have, not long ago, received an awful Warning. The Rod has been ſhaken, or rather the Sword has been brandiſhed, over our Territories.——Who can forget the general Conſternation, which ſeized our *Metropolis*, on Occaſion of the late Earthquake? And not without Reaſon. For, of all divine Viſitations, this is the moſt terribly vindictive. The Whirlwind is *ſlow* in its Progreſs; War is *gentle* in its Aſſaults; even the raging Peſtilence is a *mild* Rebuke; compared with the inevitable, the *all-overwhelming* Fury of an Earthquake.

When

pleaſurable Enjoyment. 1 Sam. xxv. 6.—The whole Verſe, in a Gradation of ſtriking Images, gives Us a moſt awful Diſplay of divine Vengeance. Vengeance quite ſudden; utterly irreſiſtible; and overtaking the ſecure Sinner, amidſt all the Careſſes of, what the World calls, *Fortune*.

* Pſal. xci. 6. † Rev. vi. 8.

When it begins, it alſo makes an End *. Puts a Period, in a few Minutes, to the Work of Ages. Ruins all, without diſtinction; and there is no Defence from the deſtructive Stroke.

Should almighty Vengeance ſtir up again thoſe fierce ſubterranean Commotions: ſhould the moſt high GOD bid ſtrong Convulſions tear the Bowels of Nature, and make the Foundations of the World tremble like a Leaf: What, *O ye careleſs ones* †, What will You do? Whither will You fly?——See! the Pavement ſinks under your Feet. Your Houſes are tottering over your Heads. The Ground on every Side, cracks and opens like a gaping Grave; or heaves and ſwells like a rolling Sea. *A Noiſe of Craſhing* ‡ is heard from without, occaſioned by the rending Streets, and falling Structures. Thunders, infernal Thunders §, bellow from beneath; mingled with deſpairing Shrieks, and dying Groans from thoſe wretched Creatures, who are jammed between the cloſing Earth, or going down alive into the horrible Pit ‖.—Where

* 1 Sam. iii. 12. † Iſai. xxxii. 11. ‡ Zeph. i. 10.

§ Before the Overthrow of *Catania* by an Earthquake, a Noiſe was heard, vaſt and horrid, as if all the Artillery in the World was diſcharged at once.

‖ Very memorable, and equally tremendous, is the Account of the Earthquake, that viſited *Sicily*, in the Year 1693.—It ſhook the whole Iſland. The Miſchief it cauſed, is amazing. Fifty-four Cities and Towns, beſide an incredible Number of Villages, were either demoliſhed, or greatly damaged. *Catania*, one of the moſt famous and flouriſhing Cities in the Kingdom, was intirely deſtroyed. Of 18,914 Inhabitants, 18,000 periſhed.

Another Earthquake almoſt as dreadful, and in the ſame Year, ſpread Deſolation through the Colony of *Jamaica*. In two Minutes Time, it ſhook down, and laid under Water, nine Tenths of the Town of *Port-royal*. In leſs than a Minute, three Quarters of the Houſes, and the Ground they ſtood on, together with the Inhabitants, were quite ſunk: and the little Part left behind, was no better than Heaps of Rubbiſh.—The Shake was ſo violent, that it threw People down upon their Knees, or their Faces, as they were running about for Shelter. The Ground heaved and ſwelled, like a rolling Sea; and ſeveral Houſes, ſtill ſtanding, were ſhuffled ſome Yards out of their Places. The Earth would crack and yawn; would open and ſhut, quick and faſt. Of which

horrid

Where now will You fly? To your ſtrong Towers? They are ſhattered in Pieces.—To the ſtronger Rocks? They are thrown out of their Place.—To the open Fields? They are a frightful Gulph, yawning to devour You —Where-ever You fly; in the Wildneſs of your Diſtraction, where ever You ſeek for Shelter: It ſhall be, *as if a Man fled from a Lion, and a Bear met Him; or went into the Houſe, and leaned his Hand upon the Wall, and a Serpent bit Him**.

Yet, there is *one* Place of Refuge, which will prove an inviolable Sanctuary, and a perfect Security. I mean, the great, the gracious, the adorable REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. Hither let Us betake ourſelves. Now, before the Day of Deſolation cometh, let us betake Ourſelves to *this Strong hold*. Then, ſhall We have no Reaſon to fear, though the Earth be moved; and though the Hills be carried into the Midſt of the Sea. For thus ſaith GOD, the omnipotent and faithful GOD; *The Sun and the Moon ſhall be darkened, and the Stars ſhall withdraw their Shining. The LORD alſo ſhall roar out of Sion, and utter his Voice from Jeruſalem, The Heavens and the Earth ſhall ſhake; but the LORD JESUS CHRIST, will be the Hope of his People, and the Strength of the Children of Iſrael*†.——Or, if the true Believer is involved,

horrid Openings, two or three hundred might be ſeen at once. In ſome whereof, the People went down, and were ſeen no more. In ſome they deſcended, and roſe again in other Streets, or in the Middle of the Harbour. Some ſwiftly cloſing, ſeized the miſerable Creatures, and preſſed them to death; leaving their Heads, or half their Bodies above Ground, to be a Spectacle of Terror, and a Prey to Dogs. Out of others would iſſue whole Rivers of Water, ſpouted to a great Height in the Air, and threatening a Deluge to that Part, which the Earthquake ſpared—Scarce a Planting-houſe or Sugar-work was left ſtanding in all the Iſland. Two thouſand Lives were loſt, and a thouſand Acres of Land ſunk. The whole was attended with frightful Noiſes, with brimſtone Blaſts, and offenſive Smells. The noiſome Vapours belched forth, corrupted the Air, and brought on a general Sickneſs; which ſwept away more than three thouſand of thoſe, who eſcaped the Fury of the Earthquake. *See* CHAMB. *Dict.* on the Word *Earthquake*.

* Amos v. 19. † Joel iii. 15, 16.

volved, in the ſame undiſtinguiſhed Ruin with the Ungodly; even this ſhall turn to his Gain. It ſhall exempt Him from the lingering Pains, and the melancholy Solemnities of a dying Bed. Like *Elijah*'s fiery Chariot, it ſhall ſpeedily waft his Soul to the Boſom of his SAVIOUR. While the hideous Cavern, that whelms his Body in the Center, ſhall be its Chamber of Reſt, till the beloved BRIDE-GROOM comes, and the Day of Reſurrection dawns.

We lift up our Eyes, and behold the radiant Colours, which ſluſh the Forehead of the Morning. We turn and gaze upon the no leſs beautiful Tinges, which impurple the Cheek of Evening. We throw around our View, and are delighted with numberleſs Forms of Fertility, which both decorate and inrich our Plains. —Whereas, other Countries are over-run with immenſe Swarms of *Locuſts:* which intercept, whereever they fly, the fair Face of Day; and deſtroy, where ever they alight, the green Treaſures of the Ground.

Ah! what avails it, that the laborious Hind ſows his Acres; or the ſkilful Huſbandman prunes his Vineyard? That Spring, with her prolific Moiſture, ſwells the Bud; or, with her delicate Pencil, paints the Bloſſom? Nor Grain, nor Fruit, can hope for Maturity; while theſe *rapacious* and *baleful* Creatures infeſt the Neighbourhood. They ravage the Gardens. They ſtrip the Trees, and ſhave the Meadows. Scarce a ſingle Leaf remains on the Boughs, or ſo much as a ſingle Stalk in the Furrows. *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth: the Land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a deſolate Wilderneſs: yea, and nothing can eſcape them* *.

Now,

* *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth,* Joel ii. 3. This is one of thoſe *bold* and *expreſſive* Metaphors, in which the *Hebrew* Language delights, and by which it is eminently diſtinguiſhed. It ſignifies a *total Devaſtation* of the vegetable Produce. Such as muſt enſue, if a raging and reſiſtleſs Fire attended the Progreſs of theſe pernicious Animals: burning with ſuch vehement Impetuoſity, that none could quench it; ſpreading ſuch extenſive Havock, that nothing could eſcape it.

Now, let the dreadful Artillery roar from all its iron Throats, and disgorge the heaviest Glut of mortal Hail. Now, Ye Sons of Slaughter; Men *skilful to destroy* *; now hurl the sulphureous Globes, which kindle into a Hurricane of Fire, and burst in ragged Instruments of Ruin.—To no Purpose. The linked Thunderbolts are turned into Stubble; the bursting Bombs are accounted as Straw. These Armies of the Air, laugh at all the formidable Preparations of War: *and when they fall on the Sword, they shall not be wounded* †.—— Surprising and awful Destination of the everlasting GOD! At once, to stain the Pride, and chastise the Guilt of Man! These are a despicable and puny Race; clad in no Coat of Mail, but crushed by the slightest Touch. They wear neither Sword, nor Scymetar, nor any offensive Weapon. Yet in spite of opposing Legions, they carry on their Depredations, and push their Conquests. *Terror* marches in their Front, and *Famine* brings up the Rear. They spread universal Devastation, as they advance; and frequently give the Signal, for the Pestilence to follow. Potent Armies lose their Hands, and haughty Tyrants tremble for their Dominions.

O! that the Natives of *Great-Britain* would bethink themselves! Would break off their Sins by Righteousness,

* Ezek. xxi. 31.

† The Prophet *Joel*, foretelling the Plague of *Locusts*, gives, under the Image of an *embattled Host*, a most alarming Display, of their terrible Appearance; their impetuous Progress; the horrible Dread they raise, as they advance; and the irreparable Mischief they leave, as they depart. Adding, among other amazing Circumstances, *When they fall upon the Sword, they should not be wounded.* Which implies, I apprehend, that no Method of Slaughter should prove destructive to their Troops; or, that every Expedient, contrived for their Suppression, should be utterly baffled. Being, through their immense Numbers as *invincible*, as if every one was absolutely *invulnerable*. For though Millions and Millions should perish, by the Weapons of War; even such a Blow, in reference to their whole *collective* Body, should scarce be perceived as a Loss, scarce be felt as a Wound; neither diminishing their Strength, nor retarding their March. *Joel* ii. 8.

neſs, and their Iniquities by cheriſhing the Influences of the Divine SPIRIT! Leſt this *overflowing Scourge**, under which ſome neighbouring Kingdoms have ſeverely ſmarted, ſhould be commiſſioned to viſit *our* Borders, and avenge the Quarrel of its MAKER's Honour.—Diſtant as thoſe countleſs Legions are, with interpoſing Seas between; yet, if GOD lift up a Standard from far, or but hiſs † unto them from the Ends of the Earth; *they come with Speed ſwiftly.*—Who will convey this Wiſh to the Ears, who will tranſmit it to the Hearts, of my Countrymen? That our Land may always appear, as it does at preſent, like the Darling of Providence. May always reſound with the Voice of Joy, and be filled with the Fruits of Plenty. May always wear the Robe of Beauty, and be adorned with the Smile of Peace.

How

* *Overflowing Scourge*, Iſai. xxviii. 15. It is the Property of a Scourge to *laſh*, of a River to *overflow*. The ſacred Writer (by an elegant παρονομασια, which beautifies the Original, but cannot be preſerved in the Tranſlation) has connected theſe different Ideas and different Effects. The vindictive Viſitation, with which He threatens the diſobedient *Jews*, ſhall *pierce deep*, as a Scourge, and *ſpread wide* as an Inundation. They ſhall feel it to their very Souls: and it ſhall involve the whole Nation in Miſery, Anguiſh, and Ruin.

There ſeems to be ſuch a Form of Expreſſion in the Service of our Church. When We pray, in behalf of our Fellow-chriſtians; "*pour* upon them the continual *Dew* of thy Bleſſing." That which may be refreſhing and ſalutary as the Dew, yet copious and abundant as the Shower.

† *Hiſs unto them*, Iſai. v. 26. With great Significancy, and peculiar Grandeur, the Prophet applies this Expreſſion to the LORD GOD of Hoſts, influencing the moſt powerful Armies, *q. d.* "They come, without a Moment's Delay, and, from the "remoteſt Regions of the Earth, to execute all his Pleaſure. "Formidable and innumerable as they are, they come—I ſay not, "upon his repeated Injunctions, or at his ſtrict Command—but "at the firſt, the very *ſmalleſt* Intimation of his Will."—Such as the Shepherds uſed to their Flocks; ſuch as the Bee-men, of old, to their Swarms; or ſuch as We, in theſe Days, to ſome of our domeſtic Animals.—The Hebrew יִשְׂרֹק I would not tranſlate, *At his Whiſtle*; becauſe this Phraſe, in our Language, creates a vulgar Sound, and conveys a low Idea: but ſuch is the Import of the Original. Which denotes all that *unconcerned Eaſe* of Action, without any of the *offenſive Familiarity* of Diction.

How great are the Advantages of *Peace!* said *Theron.* Peace at her Leiſure plans, and leads out Induſtry to execute, all the noble and commodious Improvements, which We behold on every Side. Peace ſets the Mark of Property on our Poſſeſſions, and bids Juſtice guarantee them to our Enjoyment. Peace ſpreads over Us the Banner of the Laws, while We taſte, free from Outrage, and ſecure from Injury, the Milk and Honey of our honeſt Toil *.—Amidſt the tumultuous Confuſions of *War*, who could have a Heart to contrive, or a Hand to accompliſh, any ſuch Works of Dignity and Uſe? In thoſe Days of Darkneſs and Diſtraction, how languid to the Sight are all the dewy Landſchapes of Spring? How inſipid to the Taſte are all the delicious Flavours of Autumn?—When the Nation is over-run with Armies, and embroiled in Slaughter, *a trembling Heart, and Failing of Eyes, and Sorrow of Mind* †, are the diſmal Diſtinction of the Times. Inſtead of a calm Acquieſcence in our Portion, our very Life hangs in continual Suſpenſe.

But what are all the Benefits of *external* Peace, though diſplayed in the faireſt Light, and inlivened by the ſtrongeſt Contraſts.—What are they all, compared with the Bleſſings of the Goſpel? By which Sinners may have *Peace with GOD through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.* This,

* *Pax optima Rerum*, ſays the *Latin* Poet.—But the *Orientals*, I think, diſcover the moſt ſuperlative Eſteem for this Bleſſing, by making it the conſtant Form of their Salutations, and the Subject of their moſt cordial Wiſhes for their Friends; PEACE BE UNTO THEE—In this *ſhort Sentence*, they ſeem to have compriſed a *whole Volume* of Mercies: meaning, by their ſingle שָׁלוֹם all that the *Greeks* expreſſed by their χαιρειν, υγιαινειν, ευπραττειν; i. e. A Confluence of that Joy of Mind, that Health of Body, that Proſperity of outward Circumſtances, which *complete* the Happineſs of Mankind.

We have a fine Deſcription of Peace, and its various Bleſſings 1 *Maccab.* xiv. 8, 9, &c. The Picture is very exact, though perfectly artleſs. Nothing ſhould hinder me from tranſcribing the Paſſage, but a Fear of being too *diffuſive* in my Notes. Leſt the Reader, who expects a *Treat*, ſhould complain of a *Glut*, or have Reaſon to object, that the Side-board is more copiouſly furniſhed than the Table.

† Deut. xxviii. 65.

This, resumed *Aspasio*, suggests a fresh Instance of Happiness, which others want, and *We* possess; an Instance, never to be omitted in our Catalogue of peculiar Mercies. I might add, never to be forgotten, by any *Christian*, on any Occasion ——While many Kingdoms of the Earth, are ignorant of the true GOD, and know neither the Principles of Piety, nor the Paths of Felicity; *the Day-spring from on high hath visited Us, to give the Knowledge of Salvation, and to guide our Feet into the Way of Peace*—While Millions of *rebellious Angels*, cast from their native Thrones, are reserved in Chains of Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day; We, though rebellious and apostate Sinners of Mankind, are delivered from the Wrath to come. The holy *JESUS* (blessed be his redeeming Goodness!) has endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, on purpose to rescue Us from those doleful and ignominious Dungeons; where the Prisoners of Almighty Vengeance

> ———*Converse with Groans,*
> *Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,*
> *Ages of hopeless End* *.

Yes, my dear *Theron*; let me repeat your own important Words; "What are all the Benefits of external "Peace, though displayed in the fairest Light, and in"livened by the strongest Contrasts—What are they all, "compared with the *Blessings* of the *Gospel?*"—This brings the Olive-branch from Heaven, and glad Tidings of Reconciliation with our offended GOD. This composes the Tumult of the Mind; disarms the warring Passions; and regulates the extravagant Desires. This introduces such an Integrity of Heart, and Benevolence of Temper, as constitute the Health of the Soul. This spreads such an uniform Beauty of Holiness through the Conduct, as is far more amiable, than the most engaging Forms of material Nature.

O! that Thou wouldest bow the Heavens! That Thou wouldest come down, *celestial VISITANT*; and make thy stated, thy favourite Abode in our Isle! That every Breast might be animated with thy Power; and every Community, every Individual, might wear thy

* MILTON.

thy reſplendent Badge!——Then ſhall it be the *leaſt* Ingredient of our public Felicity, That the Sword of Slaughter is beaten into a Plow-ſhare, and the once bloody Spear bent into a Pruning-hook. It ſhall be the *loweſt* upon the Liſt of our coming Bleſſings, That *Violence is no more heard in our Land, Waſting and Deſtruction within our Borders. Our* very *Officers will be Peace, and our Exactors* * *Righteouſneſs. We ſhall call* (and the Event will correſpond with the Name) *our Walls Salvation and our Gates Praiſe.* Then ſhall every Harp be taken down from the Willows, and every Voice burſt into a Song.—" In other Climes" will be the general Acclamation———

" In other Climes, let Myriads of curious *Inſects*, " ſpin the delicate Thread, which ſoftens into Velvet, " ſtiffens into Brocade, or flows in gloſſy Sattin; which " reflects a lovelier Glow on the Cheek of Beauty, and " renders Royalty itſelf more majeſtic. We are pre- " ſented with infinitely *finer Robes*, in the imputed Righ- " teouſneſs of our REDEEMER, and the inherent " Sanctification of his SPIRIT. Which beautify " the very Soul, and prepare it for the illuſtrious Aſ- " ſembly—of Saints in Light—of Angels in Glory.

" Let eaſtern Rocks ſparkle with Diamonds, and " give Birth to Gems of every dazzling Tincture. " We have, hid in the Field of our Scriptures, " the *Pearl* of great *Price*; the *white* and precious " *Stone* † of perfect Abſolution; a Diadem, which " will

* Iſai. lx. 17. *Officers* and *Exactors* ſignify Perſons, veſted with public Authority; who have it in their Power, to rule with Rigour. But theſe, inſtead of abuſing their Power, ſhall conduct the Adminiſtration, with all poſſible Equity and Gentleneſs; with a *paternal* Tenderneſs, rather than a *magiſterial* Auſterity. So that, though the Title and Office of an Exactor may remain; nothing of the domineering Inſolence, or oppreſſive Severity, ſhall continue.—The Prophet, who always delivers his Sentiments with the utmoſt Emphaſis, ſays; They ſhall be, not barely *peaceable* and *righteous*, but poſſeſſed of theſe Qualities in the higheſt Degree. Or, which implies more than any other Words can expreſs, They ſhall be *Peace* and *Righteouſneſs* itſelf.—The ſame beautiful Figure is uſed in the next Clauſe, which deſcribes the inviolable *Security* of the City, together with the univerſal both *Joy* and *Piety* of the Inhabitants. † Rev. ii. 17.

" will shine with undiminished Lustre, when all the " brilliant Wonders of the Mine are faded, extin- " guished, lost.

" Let richer Soils nourish the noblest Plants, and " warmer Suns concoct their exquisite Juices; the " Lemon, pleasingly poignant; the Citron, more " mildly delicious: or that Pride of vegetable Life, " and Compendium of all the Blandishments of Taste, " the Pine-apple. We enjoy far more exalted Dain- " ties, in having Access to the *Tree of Life*; *whose* " *Leaves are for the healing of the Nations* *; whose " Boughs are replenished with a never-failing Abun- " dance of heavenly Fruits; and the Nutriment they " dispense, is Bliss and Immortality.

" Let *Iberian* Vines swell the transluscent Cluster, " and burst into a Flood of generous Wine: let the " *Tuscan* Olive extract the Fatness of the Earth, and " melt into a soft mellifluous Stream. We shall nei- " ther envy, nor covet these inferior Gifts, so long " as We may draw Water out of the Wells of Salva- " tion. So long as We may receive that *Unction from* " *the HOLY ONE* †, those Influences of the " COMFORTER, which not only make a chear- " ful Countenance, but gladen the very Heart. Im- " parting such a *refined* Satisfaction, as the whole " World cannot give; such a *permanent* Satisfaction, " as no Calamities can take away.

" Let *Ethiopian* Mountains be ribbed with Marble, " and the *Peruvian* Mines emboweled with Gold. " We want neither the impenetrable Quarry, nor the " glittering Ore; having, in our adored MESSIAH, " a sure *Foundation* for all our eternal Hopes, and an " inexhaustible *Fund* of the divinest Riches.

" Be it so; that our *Isis* is but a creeping Drop; " and the *Thames* itself no more than a scanty Ri- " vulet; compared with the magnificent Sweep of " the *Ganges*, or the stupendous Amplitude of *Rio de* " *la Plata* ‡. The wretched Natives, even on the " Banks

* Rev. xxii. 2. † 1 John ii. 20.

‡ This River is near two hundred Miles broad, where it discharges itself into the Sea. It pours such an immense Quantity of the

" Banks of thoſe ſtately Rivers, are at a Diſtance
" from all the Springs of true Conſolation. Whereas,
" We have a Fountain, We have a River that iſſues
" from the Ocean of eternal Love. With incom-
" parable Dignity, and with equal Propriety, it is
" ſtyled *The River of Life* *. It viſits the Houſe of
" the Mourner, and revives the Spirit of the Sorrow-
" ful. It makes glad the City, and makes happy
" the Servants of our GOD. It quickens even the
" Dead; and every human Creature, that drinks of
" its Water lives for ever.

" Let *Aſiatic* Iſlands boaſt their Mountains of Myrrh,
" and Hills of Frankincenſe. Let *Arabian* Groves,
" with a ſuperior Liberality, diſtil their healing Gums;
" and ripen, for vigorous Operation, their vital Drugs.
" We have a *more ſovereign* Remedy, than their moſt
" powerful Reſtoratives, in the great MEDIATOR's
" atoning Blood. We have a *more refreſhing* Banquet,
" than all their mingled Sweets, in commemorating
" his Paſſion, and participating his Merits.

" In ſhort: We have an Equivalent, far more than
" an Equivalent, for all thoſe choice Productions,
" which bloom in the Gardens, or baſk in the Or-
" chards of the Sun. We have a Goſpel, rich in pre-
" cious Privileges, and abounding with ineſtimable
" Promiſes: We have a SAVIOUR, full of *forgiv-*
" *ing Goodneſs*, and liberal of *renewing Grace*. At
" whoſe auſpicious Approach, Fountains ſpout amidſt
" the burning Deſart; under whoſe welcome Foot-
" ſteps, the ſandy Waſte ſmiles with Herbage; and
" beneath his potent Touch, *The Wilderneſs buds and*
" *bloſſoms*,

the liquid Element into the *Atlantic* Ocean, that freſh Water may be taken up for the Space of many a League. It continues thus *amazingly vaſt* through a Courſe of ſix hundred Miles: when it divides into two mighty Branches, the *Parana* and the *Paraguay*. Which, having run in ſeparate Channels, ſeveral thouſand Miles along the Country, unite at laſt; and form, by their Conflux, this magnificent and ſpacious Stream. Which is ſuppoſed to be the very largeſt in the World.—To conceive a proper Idea of its prodigious Dimenſions, We may imagine a Current of Waters, taking its riſe beyond *Jeruſalem*; and, after having received all the Rivers of *Europe* into its capacious Bed, making its Entry on the *Britiſh* Ocean, by a Mouth extended from *Dover* to *Briſtol*.

* Rev. xxii. 1.

" *bloſſoms as a Roſe* *. Or, to ſpeak more plainly, the " deſolate and barren Soul brings forth thoſe Fruits of " the SPIRIT, which are infinitely more ornamental, " than the ſilken Gems of Spring; infinitely more be- " neficial than the ſalubrious Stores of Autumn.

" We have a SAVIOUR—Tell it out among " the Heathen; that all the Nations on Earth, may " partake of the Gift, and join in the Song—A SA- " VIOUR We have, whoſe radiant Eye brightens the " gloomy Paths of Affliction. Whoſe efficacious Bleſ- " ſing makes *all Things work together, for the Good* † " of his People. Death, gilded by his propitious " Smile, even Death itſelf looks gay. Nor is the " Grave, under his benign Adminiſtration, any longer " a Den of Deſtruction; but a ſhort and ſhady Ave- " nue to thoſe immortal Manſions; whoſe *Founda- " tions are laid with Sapphires; whoſe Windows are of " Agate; the Gates of Carbuncle; and all the Borders " of pleaſant Stones* ‡."

Pardon my Rhapſody, dear *Theron*. Your own Remark, added to the grand and lovely Views, have warmed, have animated, have almoſt tranſported me. —*Theron* anſwered not a Word: but ſeemed fixed in Thought.—While He is indulging his Contemplation, We may juſt obſerve ſome other Peculiarities of the Proſpect.

Here and there, a lonely *Cottage* ſcarcely liſts its humble Head. No pompous Swell of projecting Steps, ſurrounds the Door: no appendent Wings of inferior Offices, ſkirt the Edifice: no ſtately Hall ſlabbed with Marble, and roofed with Sculpture, receives the gazing Stranger. But young-eyed Health, and white-robed Innocence, with ſweet-featured Contentment, adorn the Habitation. While Virtue lends her Graces, and Religion communicates her Honours, to dignify the Abode: rendering the blameleſs Hutt ſuperior, in *real* Majeſty, to a diſſolute Court.

At ſome Diſtance, appeared the hoary Remains of an antient *Monaſtery*, ſunk beneath the weight of revolving Years, the once venerable Fabric is leveled with the Duſt. The lofty and ornamented Temple, lies

lies rudely overgrown with Moſs, or ſtill more ignobly covered with Weeds. The Walls, where fainted Imagery ſtood, or *idolized* Painting ſhone, are claſped with twining Ivy, or ſhagged with horrid Thorn —Through Iſles, that once echoed to the Chantor's Voice, mingled with the Organ's majeſtic Sound, the hollow Winds roar, and the daſhing Storm drives. Where are, now, the ſilent Cells, the vocal Choirs, the duſky Groves? In which the *romantic* Saints prolonged their lonely Vigils, by the midnight Taper; or poured their united Prayers, before the Lark had waked the Morn; or ſtrolled, in ever-muſing Melancholy, along the Moonlight Glade.——Surely, thoſe mouldering Fragments now teach, (and with a much better Grace, with a much ſtronger Emphaſis) what formerly their unſocial and gloomy Reſidentiaries profeſſed. They teach the *Vanity* of the World, and the *tranſitory* Duration of all that is moſt ſtable, in this Region of Shadows.

Behold, on yonder Eminence, the rueful Memorials of a magnificent *Caſtle*. All diſmantled, and quite demoliſhed, it gives a Shading of Solemnity to the more lively Parts of Nature's Picture; and attempers the rural Delight, with ſome touches of alarming Dread.——*War*, deſtructive *War*, has ſnatched the Scythe from the Hand of Time, and hurried on the Steps of Deſtiny. Thoſe broken Columns, and battered Walls; thoſe proſtrate Towers, and Battlements daſhed to the Ground; carry evident Marks of an immature Downfal. They were built for Ages, and for Ages might have ſtood, a Defence and Accommodation to Generations yet unborn; if haply they had eſcaped the dire Aſſaults of hoſtile Rage ——But, what Vigilance of Man, can prevent the Miner's dark Approach? Or what Solidity of Bulwark, can withſtand the bellowing Engine's impetuous Shock?

Thoſe, perhaps, were the Rooms, in which *licentious* Mirth crowned with Roſes the ſparkling Bowl, and tuned to the ſilver-ſounding Lute the Syren's inchanting Song. Thoſe the Scenes of voluptuous Indulgence, where Luxury poured her Delicacies: where Beauty, inſidious Beauty, practiſed her Wiles; and ſpread with bewitching Art, her wanton Snares.

——Now,

——Now, instead of the riotous Banquet, and Intrigues of lawless Love, the Owl utters her hated Screams by Night, and the Raven flaps her ominous Wing by Day.—Where are the Violet couches, and the Woodbine-bowers; which fanned, with their breathing Sweets, the polluted Flame? The Soil seems to suffer for the Abuses of the Owner. Blasted and dishonoured, it produces nothing but ragged Briars, and noisome Nettles; under whose odious Covert, the hissing Snake glides, or the croaking Toad crawls. —Fearful Intimation of that *ignominious* and *doleful* Catastrophe, which awaits the Sons of Riot! when their momentary Gratifications will drop like the faded Leaf; and leave nothing behind, but Pangs of Remorse, keener far than the pointed Thorn, and more envenomed than the Viper's Tooth.

Perhaps, they were the beauteous and honoured Abodes, where *Grandeur* and *Politeness* walked their daily Round, attended with a Train of guiltless Delights. Where amiable and refined *Friendship* was wont to sit and smile; looking Love, and talking the very Soul. Where Hospitality, with Oeconomy always at her Side, stood beckoning to the *distressed* but *industrious* * Poor; and showered Blessings from her

* I say distressed, but *industrious* Poor—Because, I would not be understood, as encouraging, in any Degree, the Relief of our *common Beggars*—Towards the former, I would cultivate a tender and ever-yearning Compassion; I would anticipate their Complaints; and, as a sacred Writer directs, would even SEEK *to do them Good.*——But as to the latter, I frankly own, that I look upon it as my Duty, to discourage such Cumberers of the Ground. They are, generally speaking, lusty Drones; and their habitual *Begging*, is no better than a specious *Robbing* of the public Hive. For such *sturdy* Supplicants, who are able to undergo the Fatigue of Travelling; able to endure the Inclemencies of the Weather; and consequently much more able, were they equally willing, to exercise themselves in some Species of laudable industry—For these, the *House* of *Correction* would be a far more salutary Provision, than any Supply from our Table; and *Confinement* to *Labour* a much more beneficial Charity, than the Liberality of the Purse.

We should remember, and *they* should be taught, that the Law ordained by the Court of Heaven, is, *If a Man will not work, neither shall He eat.* If then We contribute to support them in Idleness, do We, not *countenance* and frustrate this wise Regu-

her liberal Hand.——But War, deteſteſt War, has ſtretched over the ſocial and inviting Seat, *the Line of Confuſion, and the Stones of Emptineſs* *. Now, alas! nothing but Deſolation and Horror haunt the ſavage Retreat. The ample Arches of the Bridge, which ſo often tranſmitted the wondering Paſſenger along their penſile way, lie buried in the dreary Moat.—Thoſe Relicks of the maſſy Portals, naked and abandoned, ſeem

lation, eſtabliſhed by the great SOVEREIGN of the Univerſe?———Is it not alſo a *Wrong* to the deſerving Poor, if We ſuffer theſe Wens on the Body politic to draw off the Nouriſhment which ought to circulate amongſt the valuable and uſeful Members? Money or Victuals beſtowed on theſe worthleſs Wretches, is not real Beneficence, but the *Earneſt-penny* of Sloth. It hires them, to be good for nothing; and pays them, for being public Nuiſances.

Let Us then unanimouſly join, to ſhake off theſe *dead Weights* from our Wheels, and diſlodge theſe *Swarms* of *Vermin* from our State. Let Us be deaf to their moſt importunate Clamours; and aſſure Ourſelves, that, by this determined Inflexibility, We do *GOD*, We do our *Community*, We do *them*, the moſt ſubſtantial Service.———Should they implore by the *injured* Name of *JESUS*; for the Honour of the *LORD JESUS*, let Us reſolutely with-hold our Alms. Their Meaning is,——"I "cannot go on, in my preſent ſhameful and iniquitous Courſe; "I can no longer continue to act the *wicked and ſlothful Ser-* "*want*; unleſs You will adminiſter ſome kindly pernicious Aſ- "ſiſtance. For *CHRIST*'s ſake, therefore, aſſiſt me to diſho- "nour my Chriſtian Name, and to live more infamouſly than "the vileſt Beaſts. For *CHRIST*'s ſake, help me to be a Re- "proach and Burden to my native Country; and to perſiſt in the "Way, which leads to eternal Deſtruction."—This is the *true Import* of their Petitions. And, whether the Sanction of that moſt venerable Name, added to *ſuch* a Requeſt, ſhould move our Commiſeration, or excite our Abhorrence, let every thinking Perſon judge.

I truſt, the Reader will be ſo candid, as to excuſe this long digreſſive Note; and do me the Juſtice to believe, that I am not pleading againſt, but for the *real* Poor: not to harden any One's Heart, but rather to *direct* every One's Hand.—Give, out of Gratitude to *CHRIST*, out of Compaſſion to the Needy, and be for ever bleſſed. But give not to incorrigible Vagrants; to maintain Impiety, and pamper Indolence; leſt it be demanded, one Day, *Who hath required this at your Hand?* Leſt, by ſupporting diſſolute Creatures in that abandoned Sloth, which is the Nurſe of all Vice, We become Partakers of their Guilt, and acceſſary to their Ruin.

* Iſai. xxxiv. 11.

ſeem to bemoan their melancholy Condition. No ſplendid Chariots, with their gay Retinue, frequent the ſolitary Avenues. No needy Steps, with chearful Expectations, beſiege the once bountiful Gate. But all is a miſerable, forlorn, hideous Pile of Rubbiſh.

Since Riches ſo often take to themſelves Wings, and fly away: ſince Houſes, great and fair, reel upon their Foundations, and ſo ſoon tumble into Duſt: how wiſe, how ſalutary, is our divine MASTER's Advice! *Make to yourſelves Friends with the Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs; that, when* the World fails around *You*, when the Springs of Nature *fail* within you; *they*, as Witneſſes of your Charity, and Vouchers for the Sincerity of your Faith, *may receive You into everlaſting Habitations* *:——This is to lay up Treaſure *for Ourſelves* †: Whereas, whatever elſe We amaſs, is for our Heirs, for our Succeſſors, for We know not whom This Wealth is truly and emphatically called *our own* ‡: it is an Advowſon; We have the Perpetuity. Whereas, whatever elſe We poſſeſs, is ours only for a *Turn*, or in *Truſt*.

See the dreadful, dreadful Ravages of *civil Diſcord!* Where-ever that infernal Fury ſtalks, She marks her Steps in Blood, and leaves opulent Cities a ruinous Heap §.—What Thanks then, what ardent

 and

* Luke xvi. 9. † Matt. vi. 20. ‡ Luke xvi. 12.

§ The Effects of what *Virgil* calls *Bella, horrida Bella*, were never diſplayed in Colours that *glow*, and with Figures that *alarm*, like thoſe which are uſed by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. iv. 19, &c. As this is perhaps the greateſt Maſter-piece of the Kind, the Reader will permit me to inrich the Notes, with a Tranſcript of the Paſſage.

Firſt We *ſee*, or rather We *feel*, the Effects of War on the *human Mind*; the keeneſt Anguiſh, and the deepeſt Diſmay. *My Bowels! My Bowels! I am pained at my very Heart. My Heart maketh a Noiſe in me; I cannot hold my Peace: becauſe Thou haſt heard, O my Soul, the Sound of the Trumpet, the Alarm of War.—Deſtruction upon Deſtruction is cried; for the Land is ſpoiled. Suddenly are my Tents ſpoiled, and my Curtains in a Moment.—How long ſhall I ſee the Standard, and hear the Sound of the Trumpet.*

Then

and ceaſeleſs Thanks, are due to that all-ſuperintending, ever gracious LORD, who has daſhed the Torch from her Hand; has broke her murderous Weapons; and driven the baleful Peſt from our *Iſland!*——May the ſame almighty Goodneſs ſhortly baniſh the accurſed Monſter from all Lands! Baniſh the Monſter, with her hated Aſſociate Rapine, and her inſatiable Purveyor Ambition, to the deepeſt, deepeſt Hell. Branded with everlaſting Infamy, and bound in adamantine Chains, *there* let them gnaſh their Teeth, and bite the inevitable Curb!—While *Peace*, deſcending from her native Heaven, bids her Olives ſpring amidſt the joyful Nations: and *Plenty*, in League with Commerce, ſcatters Bleſſings from her copious Horn. While *Gladneſs* ſmiles in every Eye; and *Love*, extenſive univerſal Love, levelling the Partition-Wall of Bigotry, cements every Heart in brotherly Affection.

Near thoſe Heaps of Havock, lies the Spot, ever-memorable and ſtill revered, on which an obſtinate and fatal Battle was fought—The Huſbandman, as He breaks his fallow Land, or rends the graſſy Turf, often diſcovers the horrid Implements, and the more horrid Effects, of that bloody Conflict. He ſtarts, to hear his Coulter ſtrike upon the Boſſes of a ruſty Buckler, or glide over the Edge of a blunted Sword. He turns pale, to ſee human Bones thrown up before his Plough; and ſtands aghaſt to think, that, in

Then We ſee the diſmal Devaſtations of War; and who does not ſhudder at the Sight? The whole Country laid in Ruins! Deprived of all its Ornaments, and all its Inhabitants! Reduced to a *Solitude*, and *Chaos*. *I beheld the Earth and lo! it was without Form and void: and the Heavens, and they had no Light.*——*I beheld the Mountains, and lo! they trembled, and all the Hills moved lightly.*——*I beheld, and lo! there was no Man, and all the Birds of the Heavens were fled.*——*I beheld, and lo! the fruitful Place was a Wilderneſs, and all the Cities thereof were broken down, at the Preſence of the LORD, and by his fierce Anger.*

If, after all this Profuſion of Imagery, *bold* and *animated* even to Aſtoniſhment, We can have any Reliſh for the cold Correctneſs of a *heathen* Genius, We may find ſomething of the ſame Nature in *Horace*, Lib. II. Od. 1.

in cutting his *Furrow*, He opens a *Grave*.——The grey-headed Sire often relates to his Grandſons, hanging with eager Attention on the Tale, and trembling for the Event; relates the diſmal, the glorious Deeds of that important Day.—How the Fields, now covered with waving Crops, were then loaded with mangled and ghaſtly Corpſes. How the Paſtures, now green with Herbage, were then drenched and incrimſoned with human Gore.

" On *that* extended Common, He ſays, where " the buſy Shepherd is erecting his hurdled Citadel, " the Tents were ſpread, and the Banners diſplayed; " the Spears briſtled in Air, and the burniſhed Hel- " mets glittered to the Sun.——On *yonder* riſing " Ground, where the friſking Lambs play their " harmleſs Frolics, ſtood the martial Files, clad in " Mail, and ranged in Battle-array: ſtood War, " with all its collected Horrors, like ſome porten- " tous Cloud, ready to burſt into an immediate " Storm.—On the *nearer* Plain, where the quiet Steed " grazes in Safety, and thoſe ſober Oxen chew the " juicy Herb, the fierce Encounter mixed. There, " the Javelins, launched from nervous Arms, and " aimed by vengeful Eyes, flew and reflew, whiz- " zing with Death. The Arrows lightened * from " the Strings, drenched their keen Points and " dipped their feathery Wings in Blood.—Soon as " this Shower of miſſive Steel ceaſed, inſtantly out- " ſprung Thouſands of flaming Swords. They " claſh on the brazen Shields; they cut their Way " through the riven Armour; and ſheath their " Blades in many a gallant dauntleſs Heart.———

* *Habak.* iii. 11. ברק חניתך literally tranſlated, preſents Us with that beautifully bold Figure, *The Lightening of thy Spear.*—Which, with innumerable other Graces of Speech, that give Dignity and Spirit to our modern Compoſitions, are borrowed from the Language of *Sion*; are tranſplanted from the School of the Prophets—If We ſtart into a pleaſing Amazement, at *Homer*'s δορυ μαινεται; have We not equal Reaſon to be charmed and ſurprized at *Nahum*'s יתהוללו הרכב? Every Chariot *raged* with Violence and Impetuoſity; War eager, was even *mad* to deſtroy. Nah. ii. 5.

" Here, on this diſtinguiſhed Level, the proud pre-
" ſumptuous Enemy, confident of Victory, and boaſt-
" ing of their Numbers, poured in like a Flood.
" There, a bold determined Battalion, of which my-
" ſelf was a Part, planted themſelves like a Rock, and
" broke the fierce Attack.

" Then, adds the brave old Warrior, then the
" coward Herd fled before the Vengeance of our
" conquering Arms. Then, theſe Hands ſtrewed
" the Plains with a Harveſt, different far from their
" preſent Productions. Then, *the Fathers*, ſmitten
" with inexpreſſible Dread, *looked not back on their*
" *Children* * ; though ſhuddering at the lifted Spear,
" or ſcreaming under the brandiſhed Sword. *The*
" *Fathers looked not back on their Children*, though they
" fell

* For this very ſtriking, and moſt terrific Image, We are obliged to the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Who, in a few Words, but with all the Pomp of Horror, deſcribes the Din of approaching War, and the Conſternation of a vanquiſhed People. *At the Noiſe of the ſtamping of the Hoofs of his ſtrong Horſes, at the Ruſhing of his Chariots, and at the Rumbling of his Wheels, the Fathers ſhall not look back unto their Children, for Feebleneſs of Hands.* Jerem. xlvii. 3.

Not to mention the Thunder-like Sound of the Diction; and that in a Language much leſs ſonorous than the Original; I appeal to every Reader, Whether the *laſt* Circumſtance does not awaken the Idea of ſo tremendous a Scene, and ſo horrible a Dread, as no Words can expreſs. *Virgil* has imitated the Prophet's Manner, in that very delicate deſcriptive Touch; where, repreſenting the prodigious Alarm, excited by the Yell of the infernal Fury, He ſays;

Et trepidæ Matres preſſere ad Pectora Natos.

That is, *Each frighted Mother claſped the Infant to her fluttering Breaſt.*

No One, I believe, need be informed, that the Pannic is painted, with a very ſuperior Energy, by the Poet of Heaven. In the *Pagan*'s Draught, the Effect of Fear *reſults* from the Conſtitution, and coincides with the Bias of Humanity. Whereas, in the *Prophet*'s Picture, it *counter-acts*, it *ſuſpends*, it intirely *overbears*, the tendereſt Workings and ſtrongeſt Propenſities of Nature; though inſtigated, on one hand, by the moſt importunate Calls of exquiſite Diſtreſs; and ſtimulated, on the other, by all the Solicitations of the moſt yearning Compaſſion.

" fell among the Slain, gaſhed with deadly Wounds;
" or lay expiring, in Groans of Agony, under our
" Feet."

We leave the Warrior, to repeat his ſhocking Story, and enjoy his ſavage Satisfaction. For calmer Scenes, and ſofter Delights, We willingly leave Him. —The Eye is pleaſed with the elegant Gaiety of the Parterre; the Ear is ſoothed with the warbling Melody of the Grove; but *grand* Objects, and the *Magnificence* of Things, charm and tranſport the whole Man. The Mind, on ſuch Occaſions, ſeems to *expand* with the Proſpect, and ſecretly exults in the Conſciouſneſs of her Greatneſs.——Intent upon theſe large and excurſive Views, our Friends ſcarce advert to the minuter Beauties, which addreſs them on every Side. The *Swan*, with her ſnowy Plumes, and loftily bending Head; notwithſtanding all her ſuperb Air, and lordly State; rows by, without exciting Admiration, or obtaining Notice.——Equally unnoticed is both the Array and the Action of the *Duck*; her gloſſy Neck, and finely chequered Wings; her diving into the Deep, or her darting up into Day.—The *Swallow*, ſkimming the Air in wanton Circles, or dipping her downy Breaſt in the Flood, courts their Obſervation in vain.—Nor could the *finny Shoals* attract their Regard, though they played before the Boat in ſportive Chace; or, glancing quick to the Surface, ſhewed their pearly Coats, bedropped with Gold.—Thus they, engaged in ſublime, neglect inferior Speculations. And if the Sons of Religion overlook the *diminutive*, *tranſient*, *deluſory* Forms of Pleaſure, which float on the narrow Stream of Time, or flit along the ſcanty Bounds of Senſe; it is only to contemplate and enjoy a Happineſs in their GOD, which is *elevated*, *ſubſtantial*, and *immortal*. Compared with which, whatever the Eye can ſurvey, from Pole to Pole, from the riſing to the ſetting Sun, is a Cockle-ſhell, a Butterfly, a Bubble.

From this open and inlarged Scene, they enter the Skirts of a vaſt, umbrageous, venerable *Foreſt*.—On either Side, the ſturdy and gigantic Sons of Earth, rear their aged Trunks, and ſpread their branching

Arms. Trees, of every hardy Make, and every majeſtic Form, in agreeable Diſorder, and with a wild kind of Grandeur, fill the aerial Regions. The huge, expanſive, roaming Boughs unite themſelves over the Current, and diffuſe " their Umbrage, broad and " brown as Evening."—The timorous *Deer* ſtart at the Claſhing of the Waves. Alarmed with the unuſual Sound, they look up, and gaze for a Moment; then fly into Covert, by various Ways, and with precipitate Speed; vaniſhing, rather than departing, from the Glade.

How *awful* to reflect, as they glide along the ſhelving Shores, and the moſs-grown Banks; as they ſail under the pendent Shades of quivering Poplar, of whiſtling Fir, and the ſolemn-ſounding Foliage of the Oak—how awful to reflect; " Theſe were the " lonely Haunts of the *Druids*, two thouſand Years " ago! Amidſt theſe duſky Mazes, and ſympathetic " Glooms, the penſive Sages ſtrayed. Here, they " ſought, they found, and with all the Solemnity of " ſuperſtitious Devotion, they gathered their *Miſletoe* *. Here, the viſionary Recluſes ſhunned the " tumultuous Ways of Men, and traced the myſte" rious Paths of Providence. Here they explored " the Secrets of Nature, and invoked their fabled " Gods."

Sometimes wrapt in a ſudden Réverie of Thought, ſometimes engaged in Converſation on the ſolemn Appearance

* If the Reader pleaſes, He may ſee theſe pompous Solemnities deſcribed, in VANIERII *Præd. Ruſt.* pag. 125, &c. Where, the curious Narrative of *Pliny*, is embelliſhed with the harmonious Numbers of *Virgil*.—With regard to the Reflections, occaſioned by this Account; the Compliments laviſhed on the *French*, their *Religion*, and their *Monarch*; I believe, the judicious *Proteſtant* will confeſs with me, that as our charming Author has copied the Language, and entered into the Spirit of the Antients; He has alſo catched a Tincture of their Superſtition. Imbibing, together with *all* their Elegancies and Graces, *ſome* of their fanciful and legendary Levities.

Verùm ubi plura nitent in Carmine, non Ego paucis Offendar Maculis.

HOR.

pearance of Things, the Voyagers ſcarce perceive their Progreſs. Before they are aware, this venerable Scene is loſt; and they find themſelves advanced upon the Borders of a *beautiful Lawn*. The Foreſt, retiring to the Right-hand, in the Shape of a Creſcent, compoſed what *Milton* ſtyles, "A verdurous Wall of ſtate-"lieſt Aſpect;" and left, in the Midſt, an ample Space for the Flouriſhing of Herbage.

Here, ſaid *Theron*, if You pleaſe, We will alight; and leave the Bearer of our *floating Sedan*, to purſue his ceaſeleſs Courſe—to enrich the Boſom of other Vallies, and leave the Feet of other Hills—to viſit Cities, and make the Tour of Counties—to reflect the Image of many a ſplendid Structure, which adorn his Banks; and what is far more amiable, to diſtribute, all along his winding Journey, innumerable Conveniencies both for Man and Beaſt: acquiring, the farther He goes, and the more Benefits He confers, a deeper Flow, and a wider Swell; to the remarkable Confirmation of that beneficent Maxim, *There is that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth* *.

Theron and *Aſpaſio*, walking acroſs the ſpacious Amphitheatre, ſeated themſelves at the Extremity of the Bend. Before them, lay a verdant Area, quite even; perfectly handſome; but far from gay. *Green* was all the Dreſs, without any Mixture of gaudy Flowers, or glittering Colours. Only, now-and-then, a gentle Breeze, ſkimming over the undulating Mead, impreſſed a varying wavy Gloſs on its Surface. The whole ſeemed to reſemble the decent and ſober Ornaments of *maturer Age*, when it has put off the Trappings, and bid adieu to the Levities of Youth.—The broad, tranſparent Stream, ran parallel with the Lips† of the Channel; and drew a Line of Circumvallation, as it were, to guard the calm Retreat. It appeared, where ſhaded with Boughs, like a Barrier of poliſhed Steel; where open to the Sun, like Mirror of flowing Cryſtal.—The eaſtern Edges of the River, were

* Prov. xi. 24.

† The *Greek*, which is above all Languages happy, in its beautiful Variety of *compound* Words, very neatly expreſſes this Appearance by—παχυλης τη γη.

barricaded with a kind of mountainous Declivity; on whose rude and rocky Sides, the timorous Rabbit burrowed, and the bearded Goat browzed.—Not far from the Summit, two or three Fountains gushed: which, uniting their Currents, as they trickled down the Steep, formed a natural *Cascade:* here, it was lost in the rushy Dells, or obscured by the twisting Roots; there, it burst again into View, and playing full in the Eye of Day, looked like a Sheet of spouting Silver.

In this romantic Retirement, said *Theron*, We are quite sequestered from Society. We seem to be in a World of our own; and should almost be tempted to forget, that We are encompassed with a kindred Species; did not the *Music* of those silver-tongued *Bells*, poured from a distant Steeple, and gliding along the gentle Stream, bring Us News of human Kind.

Escaped from Man, and his busy Walks, methinks, We are come to the House of Tranquillity. Such a deep, undisturbed Composure reigns all around! It is as if some august Personage was making his Entrance, or some majestic Being was upon the Point to speak, and all Nature stood fixed in attentive Expectation. No Place better fitted to cherish, or to inspire, a *contemplative Sedateness*.

Observe the Simplicity and Grandeur of those surrounding Trees: the noble Plainness of their Verdure, and the prodigious Stateliness of their Aspect. What a *Speck* are our Gardens, and what a mere *Dwarf* are our Groves, compared with these vast Plantations?—Here is none of your nice Exactness, but all is irregularly and wildly great. Here are no Traces of the Shears, nor any Footsteps of the Spade, but the Handywork of the DEITY is apparent in all.—Give *me* the Scenes, which disdain the puny Assistance of Art, and are infinitely superior to the low Toils of Man. Give *me* the Scenes, which scorn to *bribe* our Attention, with a little borrowed Spruceness of Shape; but, by their own native Dignity, *command* our Regard. I love the Prospects, which, the Moment they are beheld, strike the Soul with Veneration, or transport it with Wonder; and cry aloud, in the Ear of Reason,

Ascribe

Aſcribe Ye Greatneſs to our GOD.——Such, I think, in a very eminent Degree, is the Foreſt;

> ——— *High waving o'er the Hills,*
> *Or to the vaſt Horizon wide diffus'd,*
> *A boundleſs deep Immenſity of Shade.*

Aſp. Solomon's refined Genius ſeems to have been fond of the ſame Situation, and delighted with the ſame Objects. Therefore, at a great Expence, and in the moſt curious Taſte, He built *The Houſe of the Foreſt.*—*Iſaiah*'s divine Imagination was charmed with the ſame grand Spectacle. More frequently, than any of the Prophets, He derives his Illuſtrations from it. One Compariſon I particularly remember. Speaking of the *Aſſyrian* King, and his military Forces, He likens them to ſuch an Aſſemblage of Trees: *numerous*, as their amazing Multitudes; *ſtrong*, as their maſſy Trunks. Yet, numerous and potent as they were, they ſhould all be brought low, and laid in the Duſt. *For behold the LORD, the LORD of Hoſts ſhall lop the Bough with Terror, and the High Ones of Stature ſhall be hewn down, and the Haughty ſhall be humbled; and he ſhall cut down the Thickets of his Foreſt with Iron, and Lebanon ſhall fall by a mighty one* *.

Then He paſſes, by a moſt beautiful Tranſition, to his darling Topic, the Redemption of Sinners. He gives Us, together with one of the fineſt Contraſts † imaginable, a View of the MESSIAH and his great Salvation. When thoſe lofty Cedars are leveled with the Ground, *there ſhall come a Rod*, a Twig ſhall ſpring *from the Stem of Jeſſe, and a Branch ſhall grow out of his Roots* ‡. Which, notwithſtanding its mean Original, and unpromiſing Appearance, ſhall rear its Head

* Iſai. x. 33, 34.

† This fine Contraſt, and that artful Tranſition are, by the injudicious Diviſion of the two Chapters, very much obſcured, if not quite loſt, to many Readers. The Chapters, I think, ſhould by no means be ſeparated; but, the tenth and the eleventh, as a Continuation of the ſame Prophecy, ſhould be *united*.

‡ Iſai. xi. 1.

Head to the Skies, and extend its Shade to the Ends of the Earth.

Ther. You do well, *Aſpaſio*, to recal my roving Thoughts. This magnificent Solitude had captivated my Imagination, and I was giving a Looſe to the uſual Sallies of my Fancy. But, with a willing Compliance, I turn to a more excellent Subject —Only I muſt aſſure you, that your Remark awakens a painful Idea in *my* Mind, though a joyful one in your own. For, my Hopes, which were once high and lifted up, are now too much like that devoted proſtrate Foreſt.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, give me leave to ſay, they were never rightly founded. They were, what *Shakeſpeare* calls, *the baſeleſs Fabric of a Viſion*. Now the ſhadowy and tranſient Hopes are demoliſhed, that ſolid and everlaſting Joys may ſucceed. Let them reſt on *CHRIST*, the infinitely glorious REDEEMER, and they ſhall never be overthrown, never be removed any more.

Caſt a Look upon yonder Ivy. What can be more feeble? It has not Strength enough to withſtand the ſlighteſt Blaſt. Nay, if left to itſelf, its own Weight would cruſh it to the Earth. Yet, by twining around the Oak, how high it riſes, and how firm it ſtands! An Emblem of our State, and a Pattern for our Imitation.—Thus let Us, who in ourſelves are nothing, of ourſelves can do nothing, let us fly to *CHRIST*; rely on *CHRIST*; and, as *Barnabas* (that true Son of Conſolation) ſpeaks, *cleave to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, with full Purpoſe of Heart* *. Let us determine to know nothing, to deſire nothing, to depend on nothing, but *JESUS CHRIST* and Him crucified. Let this be the Motto for our Faith, this the Language of our Souls, *CHRIST is All.* Then ſhall our Virtues, though hitherto ſmitten with a Blaſt, revive as the Corn: Then ſhall our Hopes, though in themſelves weaker than the Ivy, mount like the Cedars.

* Acts xi. 23.

Ther-

Ther. You can hardly imagine, how a Senſe of Guilt and Unworthineſs oppreſſes my Mind. I am often diſcouraged, and cannot bring myſelf to be ſtedfaſt in Faith, or joyful through Hope.

Aſp. You cannot bring yourſelf, but GOD Almighty's Power and Grace can bring to paſs theſe deſirable Effects. And hear what the Prophet ſays farther, upon the charming Topic which introduced our Diſcourſe. Whenever the eloquent *Iſaiah* undertakes to diſplay a Truth, He gives it all the Energy, all the Beauty, and every heightening Touch, which it is capable of receiving.—This humble Shoot, ſpringing from the Stem of *Jeſſe*, ſhall riſe to ſuch a Pitch of Elevation; that it ſhall be conſpicuous far and near, and *ſtand for an Enſign of the People.* It ſhall be ſeen, not like a Beacon upon the Top of an Hill, by the *Iſraelites* only, or the Natives of a ſingle Territory; but like the great Luminaries of Heaven, ſhall be viſible in every Country, and by the whole inhabited World.——*To it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek*; not only from the remoteſt, but from the moſt barbarous and idolatrous Climes. Theſe, even theſe Perſons, though ſavage in their Nature, and deteſtable in their Manners, ſhall be freely admitted, and find Reſt under his Shadow. Nay, the Refreſhment which He yields, and the Comfort which they receive, ſhall be not ſeaſonable only, but of ſovereign Efficacy; *his Reſt ſhall be glorious* *.

From this we learn, that all the Bleſſings of *CHRIST*'s Mediation are deſigned for *Gentiles*; for the moſt abandoned and abominable Sinners.—That they are ſo full and conſummate, as to create a Calm of Tranquillity, *a glorious Reſt*, in the moſt troubled, afflicted, guilty Conſciences.—And I dare challenge even my *Theron*'s miſgiving Mind, to ſpecify any Want which is not ſupplied, any Grievance which is not redreſſed, by the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*. I formerly encountered your *Objections*, let me now combat your *Scruples*.

Ther.

* Iſai. xi. 10.

Ther. Sometimes, I have a deep and diſtreſſing Conviction of my extreme Sinfulneſs.——'Tis like a ſore Burden, too heavy for me to bear.——'Tis like the vileſt Filth, and renders me odious to myſelf; how much more lotheſome to the all-ſeeing Eye?——It appears like a Debt of ten thouſand Talents, and I have nothing, no, not any thing to pay.—Then I experience, what the *Pſalmiſt* ſo pathetically laments; *My Sins have taken ſuch Hold upon me, that I am not able to look up: yea, they are more in Number than the Hairs of my Head*, and my Heart is ready to fail; my Hopes are upon the Point to expire.

Aſp. Then, *Theron*, fly to that juſt and righteous ONE, who is the Strength of our Hearts; the Life of our Hopes; and our Portion for ever.

If Sin is a ſore *Burden*; look unto *CHRIST*, who bore it all, in his own Body on the Tree; and removed, intirely removed, that tremendous Load, which would otherwiſe have ſunk the whole World into the nethermoſt Hell.—If Sin renders us *filthy*; let Us have recourſe to that Blood of Sprinkling, which cleanſes, not from a few Stains only, but from all Guilt. By which the moſt defiled Tranſgreſſors become fair as the faireſt Wool, nay whiter than the virgin Snows *.—If Sin is a *Debt* †; ſubjecting Us to Wrath, and binding Us over to Puniſhment; let Us confide in that gracious SURETY, who has taken the Debt upon himſelf, and made it all his own. And not only ſo, but has paid it; paid it to the uttermoſt

* Pſal. li. 7.

† By theſe three Images, the *Pſalmiſt* diſplays the horrible and deſtructive Malignity of Sin, together with the free Nature and invaluable Worth of evangelical Forgiveneſs. *Bleſſed is he whoſe Tranſgreſſion*, as an inſupportable Load, (נְסוּי) *is bore* or *taken away*; *whoſe Sin*, as being the moſt abominable Filth, (כְּסוּי) *is covered*; *unto whom the LORD imputeth not* (לֹא יַחְשׁוֹב) that moſt ruinous of all Debts, *Iniquity*.—It is pleaſing to obſerve the Vehemence and Ardour, with which the royal Penitent ſpeaks on this favourite Topic. He breaks out with a Kind of holy *Abruptneſs*, and pours his Soul in a *Variety* of warm Expreſſions. As one who thought he could not poſſibly enter upon the Subject *too ſoon*, or dwell upon it *too long*. Pſal. xxxii. 1, 2.

termoſt Farthing, to the very laſt Mite: So that Juſtice itſelf can demand no more.

Let me confirm and illuſtrate this comfortable Truth, by a ſcriptural Similitude. No Similitudes are more exact, and none ſo ſtriking. *I have blotted out as a thick Cloud your Tranſgreſſions, and as a Cloud your Sins* *. A little while ago, the whole Expanſe of yonder Sky was covered with Clouds. Nothing could more ſtrongly repreſent, a Multitude of Corruptions beſieging the Heart, and a Multitude of Iniquities overſpreading the Life.—But where is, now, that immenſe Arrangement of gloomy Vapours? The Sun has ſhone them, and the Wind has ſwept them, clean away. There are none, neither great nor ſmall, remaining. From one End of the wide extended Hemiſphere to the other, we ſee nothing but the clear and beautiful Blue of the Firmament. *So* ſaith the SPIRIT of GOD to the true believer, *ſo totally* is your Guilt, however horrid and enormous, done away through the dying *JESUS*.

Ther. It is not poſſible to conceive, nor will the whole Creation afford, a more exquiſitely fine Compariſon. Perhaps, nothing can ſo emphatically deſcribe the moſt prodigious Multitude, intirely obliterated, without the *leaſt Trace* of their former Exiſtence.—But I am not only chargeable with *paſt* Iniquities; I am alſo liable to *daily* Miſcarriages. I relapſe into Sin; and when I would do Good, Evil is preſent with me.—Nay; my beſt Hours are not free from ſinful Infirmities, nor my beſt Duties from ſinful Imperfections. Which, like a Worm at the Core of the Fruit, eat away the Vigour of my Graces, and tarniſh the Beauty of my Services.

Aſp. Becauſe through the Frailty of your mortal Nature, You cannot always ſtand upright; becauſe, even the *juſt Man falleth* daily, and daily contracteth Defilement; therefore *a Fountain is opened for Sin and for Uncleanneſs* †. The Blood and Atonement of *CHRIST* are compared to a heavenly Fountain.

In

* Iſai. xliv. 22. † Zech. xiii. 1.

In which polluted Sinners may wash daily, wash hourly; and be constantly, perfectly clean.—A *Cistern* may fail; may be broken or exhausted. But it is the Property of a real Fountain, never to be dried up, always to yield its Waters. Such is the Efficacy of *CHRIST*'s Death; not to be diminished by universal and by incessant Use. It *removes the Iniquity of the Land**. *It takes away the Sin of the World* †. It is new, for our Application, every Morning; new, for this blessed Purpose, every Moment. On which Account, it makes complete Provision for our Cleansing, our Restoration, and our Comfort.—Especially, as it is not only sovereign in itself, and always free for our Approach, but is ever pleaded by a great HIGH-PRIEST in our Behalf. Therefore, the inspired Casuist directs Us to *this* Source of Consolation, under all the Upbraidings of Conscience, and all the Remains of inbred Depravity. *If any Man sin, We have an Advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our Sins* ‡.

We; St. *John* reckons Himself in the Number of those frail offending Creatures, who stand in need of *CHRIST*, as a perpetual Intercessor. This is written, not to encourage Us in the Commission of Sin; but that We may be the less discouraged, under a Sense of our Infirmities,—We *have*; not We possibly may, but We actually have. A Soul burdened with Guilt, cannot be satisfied, cannot be eased, with a bare *Perhaps*. It is therefore positively affirmed; as a Matter of established Certainty; of which We should not admit a doubt.—We have for our Advocate, not a *mean* Person, but HIM who received an illustrious Testimony from the most excellent Glory, *This is my beloved SON* §—Not a *guilty* Person, who stands in need of Pardon for Himself, but *JESUS CHRIST the Righteous*—Not a mere Petitioner, who relies purely

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* Zech. iii. 9. † John i. 29.
‡ 1 John ii. 1. § 2 Pet. i. 17.

ly upon Liberality; but one who has *merited*, fully merited whatever He asks; *He is the Propitiation for our Sins*, has paid our Ransom, and purchased our Peace—In consequence of which, He *claims* rather than asks our renewed, our irrevocable Forgiveness—This he claims, not from an *unrelenting* Judge, but from his FATHER and our FATHER—And can such a Plea meet with a Repulse? Can such an Advocate miscarry in his Suit?—If the Prophets of old were reckoned, *The Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof**; because, like their Ancestor *Jacob*, they had Power with GOD, and prevailed in Prayer: O! what a Defence; what a Security, is the divinely excellent, and ever prevailing Intercession of *JESUS CHRIST!*

"Your Graces, You complain, are sullied, and "your Services defective"—Then, my dear Friend, renounce them in Point of Confidence; and gladly receive, cordially embrace, the all perfect Righteousness of your LORD. So shall your Justification be *complete*; and your Services, though deficient in themselves, be "*accepted* in the BELOVED."—I have somewhere seen, painted upon a flat Surface, an aukward and disagreeable Countenance: In which was nothing regular, nothing graceful, but every Feature disproportionate. Yet this very Face, reflected from a cylindrical Mirror, has put off its Deformity; the Lineaments became well adjusted; Symmetry connected every Part, and Beauty smiled throughout the Whole.—Like the *former* our Virtues appear, when compared

* 2 *Kings* ii. 12. xiii. 14. There is a peculiar Beauty, and most apposite Significancy, in this *proverbial* Saying, as used by the antient *Israelites*. *Horses* and *Chariots* were deemed, in those Ages, the principal Strength of the Battle, the most formidable Apparatus of War. Of these the *Israelites* were intirely destitute. Their GOD had expressly forbidden them to multiply Horses, and We never read of their bringing any considerable Number of Cavalry into the Field—But, so long as they enjoyed the Presence of their Prophets, they wanted not this Arm of Flesh. They had more than an Equivalent for Chariots and Horses, in the *fervent*, the *effectual* Prayers of those holy Men of GOD.

compared with the immaculate Purity of GOD, or the ſublime Perfection of his Law. But they acquire the Amiableneſs of the *latter*, when preſented to the FATHER by our divine MEDIATOR, and recommended by his inconceivably precious Oblation *.

Milton, taking his Hint from the Revelations of St. *John*, repreſents our great HIGH-PRIEST, in this glorious and delightful Attitude. Repreſents Him, offering up the Supplications and penitential Duties of our firſt Parents; mixing with them the Incenſe of his own Merits: and thus interceding before the Throne.

See, FATHER! what firſt Fruits on Earth are ſprung
From thy implanted Grace in Man! Theſe Sighs
And Prayers, which in this golden Cenſer mix'd
With Incenſe, I thy PRIEST before Thee bring.
—— Now therefore bend thine Ear
To Supplication; hear his Sighs though mute!
Unſkilful with what Words to pray, let ME
Interpret for Him; ME his Advocate
And Propitiation. All his Works on ME,
Good, or not good, ingraft: MY Merit thoſe
Shall perfect; and for theſe MY Death ſhall pay †.

The Poet's Words are very *emphatical*. Yet Words can no more expreſs the *Prevalence* of our LORD's Nego-

* *They*, the Perſons and Performances of frail Men, *ſhall come up with Acceptance on mine Altar, ſaith the LORD.* Iſai. lx. 7.— Which is explained by St. *Peter*'s Comment: *Ye are an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices, acceptable unto GOD by JESUS CHRIST* 1 Pet. ii. 5. And ſtill farther aſcertained by St *Paul*'s Practice. Who, when He addreſſes the MAJESTY of Heaven with any Petition, or preſents the Tribute of Praiſe, preſumes not to do either the one or the other, but in the bleſſed MEDIATOR's Name. Becauſe, ſecluded from the grand Recommendation, they would be *offenſive* to the awful JEHOVAH, "as Smoke in his Noſtrils;" accompanied with it, they are *acceptable*, "as the ſweet ſmelling Incenſe."

† Par. Loſt. Book XI. l. 22, *&c.*

Negotiation, than the Picture of the Sun can diffuse its Splendor, or convey its Warmth.

Ther. My spiritual Wants are many. I have many Duties to discharge, and many Temptations to withstand: Many Corruptions to mortify, and many Graces to cultivate, or rather to acquire. Yet have I no Stock, and no Strength of my own.

Asp. I rejoice, that my *Theron* is sensible of his own Indigence. The good LORD keep Us both, in this Respect, as little Children; whose whole Dependance is upon their Nurse's Care, or their Parent's Bounty! Then may we, having such a Sense of our Poverty, and having a great HIGH-PRIEST over the House of GOD, come boldly to the Throne of Grace. We may apply, through the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*, for all needful Succour, and for every desirable Blessing.——If *Solomon* could say; *LORD, remember David, and all his Trouble.* If *Moses* could say; *LORD, remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob thy Servants.* How much more confidently may *we* say; "LORD, remember *JESUS*, the "Son of thy Love! Remember *JESUS*, and all his "Sufferings; *JESUS* and all his Merits. Shall "*they* be sent empty away, who have their SA-"VIOUR's Obedience to plead?"——No verily. Though they are altogether unworthy in themselves, yet worthy is the LAMB that was slain, for whose Sake their Petitions should be granted, and their every Necessity supplied.

Let me repeat to you a most beautiful and encouraging Portion of Scripture. Which you may look upon, under all your Wants, as *Charte blanche* put into your Hand by GOD all-sufficient. *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of JESUS; by a new and living Way which he has consecrated for Us, through the Veil, that is to say, his Flesh; And having an HIGH-PRIEST over the House of GOD; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith*.*

The

* Heb. x. 19, 20, 21, 22.

The Apoſtle, in this Place, and throughout this whoſe Epiſtle, alludes to the *Moſaic* Ordinances; in order to ſhew, that the Privileges of the *Chriſtian* Diſpenſation, were typefied by, yet are greatly ſuperior to, thoſe of the *Jewiſh*.—Among the *Jews*, none but the *High Prieſt*, was permitted to ſet a Foot within the Holy of Holies; and He, only on the ſolemn Day of Expiation. Whereas, *all Chriſtians* are allowed to enter into the immediate Preſence of the moſt High GOD; may have the neareſt Acceſs to HIM, who dwells in the Heaven of Heavens; and this, not once in the Year only, but at all Times, and on all Occaſions.—The High-Prieſt never made that awful Approach, but with the Blood of a *ſlaughtered* Animal. We have Blood of infinitely richer Value, to atone for our Failings, and recommend our Addreſſes; even the Blood of the *crucified* JESUS.——*Aaron* entered through the Veil of the Temple; a Way, which was ſoon to become antiquated, and forever to be aboliſhed. *We* enter by a far more noble Way; by the Fleſh of our bleſſed REDEEMER; given as a propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins. Which Way is both *new* and *living*; ſuch as never waxes old, will ſubſiſt to the End of Time, and leads to eternal Life——— Truſting in this Sacrifice, and entering by this Way, which are conſecrated on Purpoſe for our Uſe, We may not only draw near, but draw near *with Boldneſs*, with an humble filial Confidence; and preſent our Supplications with *Faith*—with *Aſſurance* of Faith—with *full* Aſſurance of Faith.

How ſtrong is the Contraſt, and how fine the Gradation! How precious the Doctrine, and how free the Privilege! What ſhall we fear, if we believe this Doctrine? What can we lack, if we improve this Privilege?—And why ſhould We not believe the former, why ſhould We not improve the latter? Since they both are founded, not on any excellent Endowments, not on any recommending Actions of our own, but *purely*, *ſolely*, *intirely* on the Blood of JESUS CHRIST.

Ther. There may come Seaſons of *Deſertion*, when all

all Graces are languid, if not dead: When the Light of GOD's Countenance is ſuſpended, if not turned into Darkneſs: and the Man is more like a lifeleſs Log, than a zealous *Chriſtian*. Theſe Frames of Mind I have heard mentioned, and I begin to know ſomething of them by Experience.

Aſp. Then, *Theron*, when you walk in *Darkneſs*, and *ſee no Light* of ſenſible Comfort, *truſt in the Name*, the unchangeable Grace, *of the LORD*; *and ſtay upon* the Righteouſneſs, the conſummate Righteouſneſs, of *your GOD**. This is not barely my Advice, but the Direction of an infallible Guide —— This agrees alſo with the Character of a real *Chriſtian*, as it is moſt exactly drawn by an unerring Pen; *We rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no Confidence in the Fleſh* †; no Reliance on any Thing of our own, either for preſent Joy or future Glory.

To rely on the Elevation of our Spirits, or the Inlargement of our Devotion, is like building our Houſe upon the *Ice:* which may abide for a Seaſon; but, upon the firſt Alteration of Weather ceaſes to be a Foundation, and becomes "Water that runneth "apace." Whereas, to derive our Conſolation from the MEDIATOR's Righteouſneſs, and JEHOVAH's Faithfulneſs, is to build our Edifice upon the *Rock:* which "may not be removed, but ſtandeth faſt for ever." The former of theſe, even amidſt all our Changes, is invariably the ſame. The latter, notwithſtanding all our Unworthineſs, inviolably ſure. Therefore, the *Fruit* of that Righteouſneſs is Peace, and

* Iſai. l. 10.

† *Phil.* iii. 3. *Exactly drawn*—Perhaps there is no where extant a finer, a more complete, or ſo lively a *Picture* of the true Chriſtian. 'Tis in *Miniature*, I own: but it comprehends all the *maſter* Lines and every *diſtinguiſhing* Feature. *We are they, who worſhip GOD in the Spirit*; with the ſpiritual Homage of a renewed Heart; with Faith, Love, Reſignation. *And rejoice in CHRIST JESUS*; in Him look for all our Acceptance with GOD; from Him derive all the Peace of our Minds; and on Him place all the Hope of our final Felicity. *And have no Confidence in the Fleſh*; renouncing ourſelves, in every View, as unprofitable Servants; diſclaiming all our own Works and Attainments, as defective Services.

and the *Effect* of this Faithfulneſs is, if not rapturous Joy, yet *Quietneſs and Aſſurance for ever* *.

So that, when it is Winter in my Soul, and there ſeems to be a Death on all my ſenſible Delights, I would ſtill ſay with the Pſalmiſt: "*Why art thou ſo* "*diſquieted, O my Soul?* CHRIST is the ſame "amidſt all thy Derelictions. *He is a green Fir-* "*Tree* †, which never loſes its Verdure. Under his "Shadow Thou may'ſt always find Repoſe. His "Merit and Atonement are ſtill mighty to ſave; "they conſtitute an everlaſting and infinite Righte- "ouſneſs. The Promiſes of GOD, through his "Mediation, *are yea, and amen* ‡; are unqueſtionably "and unalienably thine."

Ther. 'Tis very probable, I may meet with *Afflictions*; Death in my Family, or Diſeaſe in my Perſon. Diſappointments may fruſtrate my Deſigns. Providence may wear a frowning Aſpect, as though the LORD had a Controverſy with his ſinful Creature, and was making Him to poſſeſs the Iniquities of his Youth. And what will be ſufficient to ſupport and to cheer, in ſuch a gloomy Hour ‖?

Aſp. The Righteouſneſs of CHRIST.—Nothing is ſo ſovereign, to calm our Fears, and remove all Apprehenſions of the divine Wrath. Apprehenſions of the divine Wrath, would draw the Curtains of Horror around our ſick Beds, and throw upon our languiſhing Eye-lids the Shadow of Death §. But a believing Improvement of CHRIST's Satisfaction for our Offences, *clears up* the mournful Scene, and *takes away* the Sting of Tribulation.

Attending

* Iſai. xxxii. 17. † Hoſ. xiv. 8. ‡ 2 Cor. i. 20.

‖ The Sufficiency of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, to anſwer all theſe important and delightful Ends, is excellently diſplayed in Mr. RAWLIN's Sermons, on *CHRIST the Righteouſneſs of his People*. In which the Public have ſeen the grand and amiable Eſſentials of the Goſpel, delivered in maſculine Language; defended by nervous Reaſoning; and animated with a lively Devotion.

§ Alluding to that Deſcription of Tribulation and Anguiſh, which, I believe, no Perſon of Senſibility can read without ſhuddering; *My Face is Foul with Weeping, and on my Eye-lids is the Shadow of Death.* Job xvi. 16.

Attending to this great Propitiation, the Sufferer ſees his Sins forgiven, and his GOD reconciled. From whence he concludes, that the ſevereſt Afflictions are only fatherly Corrections; ſhall not exceed his Ability to bear; and ſhall aſſuredly obtain a gracious Iſſue. He can fetch Comfort from that chearing Word, *I will be with him in Trouble:* And expect the Accompliſhment of that moſt conſolatory Promiſe, *I will deliver Him, and bring him to Honour**.—Theſe Supports have enabled the Saints to kiſs the Rod, and bleſs the hand which chaſtiſed them. To poſſeſs their Souls, not in Patience only, but in Thankfulneſs alſo. While they have *looked inward*, and diſcerned the abſolute Need of theſe bitter but ſalutary Medicines: Have *looked upward*, and beheld the Cup in a moſt wiſe and tender PHYSICIAN's Hand: Have *looked forward*, with a joyful Hope, to that better World; where GOD will wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Sorrow, nor any more Pain.

Ther. The laſt Occaſion of Need is the trying Hour of *Death*, and the tremendous Day of *Judgment*. Will this Righteouſneſs carry Us, with Safety, through the darkſome Valley; and preſent us, with Acceptance, at the dreadful Tribunal?

Aſp. It will: It will.—This ſilences all the Curſes of the Law, and diſarms Death of every Terror. To believe in this Righteouſneſs is to meet Death at our SAVIOUR's ſide; or rather, like good old *Simeon*, with the SAVIOUR in our Arms.—*They overcame*, ſays the beloved Diſciple, they overcame the laſt Enemy, not by natural Fortitude, or philoſophic Reſolution, but *by the Blood of the* LAMB†; by a believing Application of the victorious REDEEMER's Merit.——*I know*, adds the heroic Apoſtle, *whom I have believed*‡; I am aſſured, that my JESUS is infinitely faithful, and will not deſert me; that his Ranſom is abſolutely ſufficient, and cannot deceive me. Therefore, with a holy Bravery, He bids

* Pſal. xci. 15. † Rev. xii. 11. ‡ 2 Tim. i. 12.

bids Defiance to Death; or rather triumphs over it, as a vanquiſhed Enemy; *Thanks be to* GOD *who giveth Us the Victory through our* LORD JESUS CHRIST*!—Nay, through the wonderful Efficacy of CHRIST's Propitiation, *Death is ours* †; not our Foe, but our Friend and Deliverer. We may number it among our Treaſures; and reſt ſatisfied, That *to die, is Gain.*

What though our Fleſh ſee Corruption. Though this Body, vile at preſent, be made viler ſtill, by dwelling amidſt Worms, and mouldering in the Duſt; yet through HIS Righteouſneſs, who is the Reſurrection and the Life, it ſhall ſhake off the Diſhonours of the Grave: It ſhall riſe to a new and illuſtrious State of Exiſtence: It ſhall be made like the *glorious* and *immortal* Body of our triumphant LORD.—If the Body be ſo refined, ſo exalted; what will be the Dignity, what the Perfection, of the Soul! Or rather, of Soul and Body both, when they are happy and indiſſolubly united, at the Reſurrection of the Juſt?—Shall they have any thing to fear, when the Judgment is ſet, and the Books are opened? 'Tis probable there will be no Accuſation, 'tis certain *there is no Condemnation, to them that are in* CHRIST JESUS‡ Who ſhall lay any thing to their Charge? *It is* GOD ——not Man, or Angel, or any Creature but GOD ——*that juſtifies* them. The God whoſe Law was broke, the GOD to whom Vengeance belongeth, He Himſelf pronounces them *innocent*, becauſe their Iniquities have been laid upon CHRIST; He Himſelf pronounces them *righteous*, becauſe they are intereſted in the Obedience of their REDEEMER; on theſe Accounts, He Himſelf pronounces them *bleſſed*, and gives them an *abundant Entrance* into the Joy of their LORD.

But what can expreſs, or who can imagine their Happineſs, when they take up their Abode, in the Palaces of Heaven; amidſt the Choirs of Angels; and under the Light of GOD's Countenance! When they

* 1 Cor. xv. 57. † 1 Cor. iii. 22. ‡ Rom. viii. 1.

they poſſeſs *the Hope of Righteouſneſs* *; when they wear *the Crown of Righteouſneſs* †; and receive that great, that eternal Salvation, which is an adequate Recompence for the Humiliation and Agonies of *JESUS CHRIST the righteous* ‡.

Come then my dear *Theron*, let Us henceforth be as Branches engrafted into the heavenly VINE; derive all our Sap, all our Moiſture, all our Conſolation, from his Fulneſs. Let Us live upon our all-ſufficient REDEEMER, as the *Iſraelites* ſubſiſted on their Manna from Heaven, and their Waters from the Rock; and not wiſh for *other*, as we cannot poſſibly enjoy *better* Suſtenance.

Ther. Is this the Meaning of our LORD's Exhortation, when he ſhews the Neceſſity of *eating his Fleſh*, and *drinking his Blood*?

Asp. 'Tis the very ſame. A repeated and inceſſant Application of our SAVIOUR's Merits, for all the Purpoſes of Piety and Salvation, is the Kernal of this Nut, the Meaning of this Metaphor—*Then* we habitually advert to JESUS CHRIST, as dying for our Sins, and riſing again for our Juſtification; performing all Righteouſneſs, that we may be intitled to an eternal Crown; and interceding in Heaven, that we may be filled with all the Fulneſs of GOD: *Then* we eat his Fleſh, and drink his Blood. Then we derive a Life of ſolid Comfort, and real Godlineſs, from his mediatorial Offices; juſt as we derive the Continuance of our natural Life, from the daily Uſe of alimentary Recruits.

Ther. Your Diſcourſe brings to my Remembrance that magnificent and beautiful Paſſage in Scripture, where *CHRIST* is called THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Your Doctrine ſets the Compariſon in a very advantageous Light; gives it the utmoſt Force, and the greateſt Propriety.—The Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, according to your Account, is as extenſively uſeful in the *Chriſtian* Life, as the Beams of that grand Luminary are in material Nature.——The Sun fills the *Air*; where it diffuſes Light, and creates Day.—The

* Gal. v. 5. † 2 Tim. iv. 8. ‡ 1 John ii. 1.

—The Sun penetrates the *Ocean*; from whence it exhales Vapours, and forms the Clouds.—In the *vegetable* Creation, the Sun raiſes the Sap, and protrudes the Gems; unfolds the Leaves, and paints the Bloſſom; diſtends the Fruit, and concocts the Juices—Turn we to the *animal* World; the Sun delights the Eye, and gladdens the Heart. It awakens Millions of Inſects into Being: and imparts that general Joy, which every ſenſible Creature feels. Indeed *there is nothing hid from the Heat thereof.*

Aſp. Thus the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, that true and only *Son of Righteouſneſs ariſes* on his People *with Healing in his Wings* *. So various, ſo efficacious, and ſo extenſive are his Influences. Like a *Sun*, He enlightens and enlivens: like *Wings*, He cheriſhes and protects: like a Remedy He *heals* and reſtores. And all, by Virtue of his Righteouſneſs, on account of his *Righteouſneſs*—Nor can we doubt, nor need we wonder, if we conſider its Nature and its Author. Its Nature; it is conſummately excellent, has every Kind, and every Degree of Perfection. Its *Author*; it is the Righteouſneſs and Obedience of that incomparable PERSON, in whom *dwells all the Fullneſs of the* GODHEAD.

It muſt therefore—You will permit me to ſum up in a Word, what has been diſplayed at large—It muſt be fully anſwerable to the *Demands* of the *Law*, even in its higheſt Purity, and utmoſt Exactneſs. It is infinitely ſuperior to the *Demerit* of *Sin*, and intirely abſolves from all Guilt, intirely exempts from all Condemnation.—It is a moſt valid and never-failing Plea, againſt the *Accuſation* of *Satan* and the Challenges of Conſcience.—It eſtabliſhes an undoubted *Title* to *every* Bleſſing, whether in Time or in Eternity, whether of Grace or of Glory.—It is a ſure Support for the Chriſtian in an Hour of *Diſſertion*, and in the Agonies of *Death*. Caſting Anchor on this Bottom, He may diſmiſs every Fear, and ride out every Storm. Leaning upon this Staff, He may go down to the Repoſe of the Grave; and neither be appalled at the ſolemn Harbingers

* Mal. iv. 2.

bingers of Diſſolution, nor terrified at its far more awful Conſequences.—The Merit of this Righteouſneſs, and the Power of its DIVINE AUTHOR, will unſeal the Tomb; will bring forth the ſleeping Duſt, from the Chambers of Putrefaction; and build up the whole Man into Immortality and Glory. By this He will be preſented *without pot** ; preſented *faultleſs* † ; yea, be preſented *perfect* §, and with *exceeding Joy*, before the Throne.

What a Gift then is the *Righteouſneſs of CHRIST*: —Bleſſed be GOD, for all the indulgent Diſpenſations of Providence! Bleſſed be GOD, for all the beneficial Productions of Nature! But above all, bleſſed be GOD, for the tranſcendent and unſpeakable Gift of *CHRIST*—For the unſearchable and infinite Treaſures of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

* Eph. v. 27 † Jude 24 § Col. i 28.

A

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